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BY

SUZANNE LAFOLLETTE

Fully Illustrated

HARPER & BROTHERS *Publishers*
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To

my father and mother,

WILLIAM L. AND MARY TABOR LAFOLLETTE

54466

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PREFACE

Before the Revolution, certain of our painters had met with the liveliest success abroad; at the present day certain of our artists are evoking the surprised admiration of Europeans. And so, throughout its history, American art has been producing work of far more than local importance. When we come, however, to examine into the local appreciation of our art we frequently find it less strong, less well-founded than the opinion of American work to be discovered in other countries. Part of the explanation of this lies with the clamor of the inferior men, which, to be sure, may be loud enough to mislead the people near by, even if it does not carry to a distance; but some of the blame for defective recognition of the value possessed by American art must be laid at the door of our critics.

Too often the reader finds them to be mere cataloguers —giving tediously "inclusive" histories from which the future may be supposed to work out the distinctions between good and bad; or, too often again, the books simply turn to patrioteering, booming the home product to please people who want more evidence for the *America First* philosophy, and correspondingly repelling those who can see things in perspective. The public can hardly be blamed if it is rendered suspicious of the value of our art when writers insist on treating it purely from its own standpoint and not as something to be defined in terms of the place it holds in relation to the great schools of other countries and periods. American artists themselves —or at least the men among them who are worth while—

have never shrunk from such a test; and so one important matter in writing on the art of this country is a standard which includes other arts than our own. Ephemeral production will suffer in the comparison, but it is only by applying such a criterion that we can begin to have the confidence in our effort which it deserves.

Miss LaFollette's book seems to me a most important document for the appreciation of American culture; and precisely because it eschews both the colorless method of the encyclopædic writer who collects all names and dates, and the special pleading—the specious pleading—of the propagandist for national pride. Drawing on the books of record for historical data, drawing on first-hand contact with public and private collections for eyesight knowledge (instead of the usual mere reading knowledge!) of the works treated, building on conversations and correspondence with many of the best of our artists or with those who knew them and their opinions, this book has a thoroughness as to matters of fact, together with a discernment in selection, which permits the reader to rely on the historical part of the work, while he feels that the critical part, based on such study and on well-rounded judgment, must gain in authority with the passing of time.

An approach to the subject not attempted before in dealing with American painting and sculpture characterizes the book throughout. It is the interpretation of our art by reference to the changing mentality of the country as its social and economic structure evolves. Here is an element by which the layman may check up the author's conclusions, while the person already well acquainted with our art will grasp the reasons for its failures and successes far better when once he sees them connected with our history in its wider scope. The earlier chapters,

having much to say of the applied arts, give the social setting of the development with especial fullness, while its story quickens in appeal as we emerge into the later time with more numerous and more differentiated schools of painting, sculpture, and architecture. Even so, their qualities are still the qualities of the country as a whole. Our complicated growth makes the task of the critic harder than that offered by the comparatively simple period of our early national life, but in the same increasing measure the reader's interest becomes more vivid as he proceeds with the recital.

As we find the book written with an intent to tell how things are, instead of how the optimist or the pessimist would have them appear, finding in it a careful weighing of what we have done well and what we have done ill, we may also find new cause for belief in the enduring value of the best of our work.

Walter Pach

An Acknowledgment

Although they are in no sense to be held responsible for any statements of fact or opinion to be found in this book, Mr. Walter Pach, Mr. John Sloan, Mr. Charles Prendergast, Mr. A. S. Baylinson, and Mr. Bertram Hartman have been generous with their time and patient in answering many questions, and I am most grateful to them. Mr. Thomas Hibben has been equally generous with his time and his knowledge, and I am deeply indebted to him for his suggestions concerning, and his critical appraisal of, the chapters on architecture. Mr. Eugene Schoen has earned my gratitude not only for information which he has furnished, but also for having taken the trouble to read the chapters on architecture in the proof.

Monsignor David O'Dwyer brought to bear upon several chapters of the book a critical faculty so rare and so helpful that I only regret not having had the whole of the text ready for his criticism before he went to Europe for the summer. Mrs. Frederick W. MacKenzie has patiently listened to every chapter, and has given me the benefit of a fine ear for rhythm and an unusual sureness in detecting those unintentional repetitions of words and obscurities of meaning which may so easily elude the eye of the writer.

My thanks are due to the Frick Art Reference Library, and to the Library of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, especially to Miss Felton and her assistants in the Division of Photographs. Also to the museums, dealers, collectors and artists who have permitted reproduction of the works

in their possession. Special mention is due to the C. W. Kraushaar Art Gallery, the members of whose staff cheerfully undertook, at some inconvenience, to help me in the matter of procuring certain of the illustrations concerning which I had met with difficulties.

S. L. F.

October, 1929

SECTION I

THE COLONIAL PERIOD

The Foundations

Colonial Painters

Chapter One

The Foundations

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH, leader of the first permanent English settlement on the North American continent, canvassed his situation thoroughly. He explored the wilderness, looking for precious metals; he took stock of the country and the natives; and then he wrote to his employers, the London Company, that "Nothing is to be expected thence but by labour." It was true; Spain, far to the south, a century before had had the good fortune to pre-empt the most immediately desirable portion of the New World, a section rich in agricultural and mineral resources, and inhabited by a settled population already accustomed to the exactions of a native nobility. Those English adventurers who had hoped to repeat the luck of Spain found themselves on a long narrow strip of northern coast, inhabited by hostile and highly mobile hunting tribes, between a mountain range covered by virgin forest on the one side, and on the other "the unplumbed, salt, estranging sea." There were no precious minerals; there was no settled and docile population to be conquered and forced to labor the earth for the conquerors. There was only abundance of land, magnificent forests, an excellent potential trade with the natives, waters abounding in fish, considerable variety of soil and

climate; in short, all the resources necessary for a thriving civilization save only human labor.

There was a striking contrast, therefore, between the beginnings of English, Dutch, and French settlement in the New World, and the Spanish beginnings. The Conquistadores had begun almost immediately after the conquest to construct palaces and churches. Spanish architects supplied designs for these great buildings in the exuberant Churrigueresque baroque style, to be executed by native workmen already highly skilled in the arts of building and sculpture, who added to the ornate carving of the façades and the interiors something of their powerful native feeling for form. When Jamestown was founded, the Cathedral of Mexico had already been under construction for half a century and that of Puebla for longer. St. Augustine, in Florida, had been settled for a century; and already the Spanish outposts—priests and soldiers—were along the Rio Grande, in Texas and New Mexico, and the building of those missions had begun which in the eighteenth century would also dot the coast of California, and in the twentieth would exert a strong if somewhat belated influence on American architecture.

The settlers along the northeastern coast were obliged, on the other hand, to build their civilization from the beginning; and the beginning was necessarily crude. For, in order to make this rich land productive, it was necessary first to people it. Although the Colonists were not without that evangelistic purpose which has always been associated with Christian colonial enterprise, their attempts to tame the natives and render them exploitable were unsuccessful. The red men seemed to prefer darkness with freedom to a state of Christian spirituality without it. The settlers could disperse and finally exterminate

them; they could not make them either good Christians or good slaves. But the very fact that the natives could be dispersed and exterminated determined the nature of Colonial empire; for it made the country attractive to land-hungry yeomen and laborers overseas, and to those of the gentry also who hoped either to improve their economic condition or escape the political ferment of the times. The Atlantic coast of North America, therefore, soon became a field for the expansion of European population and culture.

The early settlers were French, Dutch, Swedish, and English. The French, in their settlements in Canada and later in New Orleans, proceeded to develop a civilization which still retains much of its Gallic flavor. The Dutch and Swedish settlements were soon forcibly merged with the English possessions, and their distinguishing characteristics tended thereafter to disappear before the dominant English influence. The Swedes, however, contributed to the Colonial economy the house built of horizontal logs which became the typical cabin of the later westward-faring pioneers. The main Dutch legacy was of more doubtful value—those baronial domains that lined the shores of the Hudson.

The Colonists were chiefly English, Puritan, and poor —three facts important enough in their bearing on American life to warrant some discussion. Being English, the Colonials would naturally cling to English usages, knowing no others. Where there was a deviation from English usage, it would be imposed by the conditions of their new environment. There was an attempt in every colony to transplant the English system of large landed estates; but its success was conditioned by local differences of soil and climate. In a country offering an apparently inexhaustible expanse of land to be had for the taking, the

English system of tenant-farming was impracticable, for freemen naturally would not work for landlords when they could "labor the earth" for themselves. The only way to exploit labor was to enslave it; and therefore the system of landed estates was successful only where fertile soil and a mild climate made slavery and indenture profitable. In New England, where long winters and a niggardly soil made servile labor unprofitable, a system of freeholds became the rule.

There was also, quite naturally, an attempt to transplant English social distinctions. Those of the gentry who migrated clung jealously to the honors and privileges which attached to their status in the mother country; and many who had no hereditary claim to that status nevertheless assumed it as prosperity enabled them to support their new social pretensions. With the gradual preemption of the fertile coast lands, and the building up of fortunes in trade and shipbuilding, there developed an aristocracy which dominated the political and economic life of the Colonies, and strove to emulate the English aristocracy in fashion, culture, and refinement.

The Colonial Puritans were blood brothers of those image breakers who desecrated the churches of England under Cromwell with such thoroughness that nothing is rarer in England today than an example of mediæval religious art. There were no images to destroy in America, but the Puritans could at least see to it that none was fashioned in those sections where their influence was paramount. They went farther, indeed. Any attempt to please the eye, they were inclined to regard as a diversion from the one purpose which they considered valid: the attempt to please God. Thus, as Mr. Lewis Mumford has well said, "by forbidding a respectable union between the artist and the useful arts, they finally turned

the artist out into the streets, to pander to the first fine gentleman who would give him a kind word or a coin." Unaware, as they were, that art and religion are but two different modes of seeking the noumenon—the essence—behind the phenomenon—the appearance—of things, they failed to recognize the essential affinity between them. They found in God the end of man's eternal search for the meaning of life; but their god was the jealous and vengeful god of the Old Testament. He did not speak to them through the world of his creation; rather, he stood apart from it and judged it. Therefore they were unable to understand the essentially religious aspect of the artist's approach to the visible world and his attempt to express its meaning through form and color.

So long as this spirit dominates a community, art in any of its aspects will find little to nourish it. The early Puritan was as much absorbed in the states of his own soul as any present-day disciple of Freud; and he felt deep concern lest the states of his neighbor's soul should fail to conform to the orthodox Puritan pattern. Thought and discussion among the early Massachusetts settlers centered around points of theology that seem to us as incomprehensible or irrelevant as some modern discussion of abstruse theories of art would have seemed to them; and so much of their time was absorbed by long daily church services that the magistrates finally became alarmed lest interest in the rewards and punishments of the next life should exclude attention to the needs of this one. No gift, as Judge Sewall's diary shows, was considered more appropriate or desirable than a well-bound copy of some reverend doctor's latest discourses. The first duty of the citizen, and his chief interest, was conformity to the Puritan standard of godliness; all else was vanity.

No philosophy could possibly have assorted better with the economic influences making for simplicity in living. It was necessary, until the Colonial economy should be established, that the Colonist's interest in the things of this world should be pretty exclusively utilitarian; and here was a religion that forbade any other approach to worldly things. It is curious how often a mode of thinking developed to further a certain purpose lends itself to one exactly opposite. The Puritan sought to suppress the artistic impulse in order that it might not divert him from spiritual interests; his descendants sought to suppress it in order that it might not divert them from material interests. This habit of thought was pregnant with meaning for the future of America. As the population of the original Colonies overflowed into the interior, they carried it with them; and it served as justification for the barrenness and discomfort of frontier life; was, indeed, perhaps the only thing that made that life endurable. It fortified the pioneer in the attitude which his isolation and poverty forced upon him, of indifference to or contempt for the more humane aspects of life. His isolation was of course unnatural; had there been no speculative element in pioneering, expansion would have been gradual in response to the actual needs of a growing population, and civilization would have extended to the frontier. Since the speculative element did enter in—and largely—the frontier communities became isolated patches of population, far removed from markets, from schools, from books and pictures; in short, from all the advantages of life in a long-established community. Their life was necessarily poor and dreary; and if their acquisitiveness sustained them on the one hand, the Puritan notion that life is not to be lived for the amenities sustained them on the other. The general indifference

to the things of the spirit bred by this combination of philosophy and circumstance has by no means, it is hardly necessary to remark, ceased to retard the progress of culture in America.

There were few wealthy men among the early settlers. Most of them were lower middle class folk and laborers, sent out by colonizing companies or noblemen who had received vast grants of land from the Crown, under arrangements that involved the payment of annual quitrents and interest on capital invested in the settlement. Over the quitrents there were bitter struggles which ended in the reversion of the proprietary colonies to the Crown; but Colonial enterprise could not dispense with British capital. The purpose of the British government, indeed, was to maintain the Colonies as a source of raw materials and a market for British manufactured goods; and it sought to increase Colonial dependence through a number of navigation acts calculated to discourage the development of Colonial manufacturers and secure to English merchants a monopoly of Colonial trade. The policy, although not entirely successful, was sufficiently so that throughout the Colonial period the Colonists labored under the burden of constant indebtedness to the mother country, and a large share of their annual production was drained off in payments to British creditors. Although they prospered, therefore, and the state of general well-being among them soon reached a higher level than that in the landlord-ridden European countries, they commanded no such economic surplus as is essential to any important development of the fine arts. Even as late as the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when the American economy was well established and substantial fortunes had been made in tobacco, shipbuilding, and trade, Thomas Jefferson, recommending the study of

European architecture as of practical relation to the needs of the country, said that painting and sculpture were "too expensive for the state of wealth among us. They are worth seeing but not studying."

§

Early Colonial art, therefore, was almost exclusively utilitarian. For architecture there was a place in Colonial life, even though a modest one. The Colonists must have houses, churches, and public buildings. For craftsmanship too there was a place. They required the objects of daily use that the craftsman produced; and if Puritan austerity at first reinforced Puritan economy in these things, it was not many years before both were sufficiently relaxed to permit of a creditable and interesting development. When colonization began, English architecture and industrial art were still in the mediæval tradition. Architecture, indeed, was still an aspect of craftsmanship; the gentleman architect of the classical revival, who derived his knowledge from books and reduced the craftsman to a slavish executant of carefully prepared designs, had not yet supplanted the master-builder whose work was animated by a sound knowledge of tradition, materials, and workmanship. England had felt the influence of the Renaissance in literature, in philosophy, in religion; she was in process of feeling it economically and politically. But her craftsmanship was still soundly mediæval. The classic revival had begun, but before it would be really felt, the long upheaval of the civil war and the Protectorate would intervene. When the Colonists, therefore, came to replace their "smoaky wigwams" with more substantial dwellings, they built the steep-roofed, gabled houses of mediæval England, and filled them with the furnishings and utensils they had

brought from home or with those of their own manufacture, closely adhering to English models in form and decoration.

There were few craftsmen among them. Since the protection of his guild ensured the English artisan a decent living at home, he had not the same temptation to migrate as the yeomen and laborers whom the enclosures had beggared. When craftsmen did come over, it was not easy to persuade them to continue to work for others, since an abundance of cheap land offered constant inducement to work for themselves. This inducement was especially strong in Virginia, because of peculiar circumstances. The plantations were far apart, and the artisan lost much time in traveling from one to another. He was obliged, moreover, to take his pay in tobacco, which was the currency of the colony; and he must thereby incur all the risks involved in growing, harvesting, and marketing. Under these circumstances it was only natural if he preferred to get his tobacco by the more direct and lucrative method of growing it himself. When he did consent to follow his trade, the possible alternative of independent tillage enabled him to charge so high a price for his skill that the planters found his demands a heavy burden and the Colonial government vainly tried to limit his wage by law. In the North, compact settlements and a niggardly soil made the crafts more attractive; but even there the alternative was so effective that the Puritan fathers repeatedly felt themselves obliged to attempt legal limitation of the craftsman's wage.

No doubt, therefore, much of the early building did not know the hand of the professional carpenter. The early Colonist, under these circumstances, would build his own dwelling with the co-operation of his neighbors. The houses which replaced the first crude temporary

shelters were by no means pretentious, consisting generally of one or two rooms on the ground floor, with a chamber or two in the gable overhead. The rigors of the climate made it necessary that these buildings should be substantial, but there was no compelling reason why they should be elegant. In Massachusetts, indeed, the theocracy, which undertook a rather attentive supervision of the settlers' lives, sternly set itself against all vain expense. Even the deputy-governor, soon after the founding, incurred official disapproval by wainscoting his house, his defense being that he did it for greater warmth, and that the wainscot consisted merely of rough clapboards. The houses of the seventeenth century remained severely plain, although they increased in size as families grew larger and wealth accumulated. In his *Economic History of Virginia,* Bruce states that no seventeenth-century house in that colony could lay claim to any beauty of design. Certainly the æsthetic motive cannot be said to have entered into their construction. Nor did pride, apparently. The records show that even the wealthiest among the seventeenth-century planters were contented with frame houses of few rooms. The building of such mansions as Westover and Mount Airy awaited the security and ease of the next century.

They built as they were accustomed to build. If their houses differed in material from the English prototypes, it was because of special conditions in their new environment. Wood was scarce in England; therefore houses were built of stone, brick, or timber and stucco. In the Colonies, on the other hand, wood was plentiful, while want of lime for mortar at first discouraged building in other materials. The walls of the early New England and Virginia houses were filled with wattle and daub or cat and daub in the manner to which the builders were

Courtesy of the Essex Institute

The John Ward House, Salem, Massachusetts

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

accustomed at home, but the severity of the climate made it necessary to sheathe the outer walls with shingles or clapboards. In Pennsylvania, the abundance of lime and of easily manipulated ledge stone encouraged the building of stone houses. Stone was also used to some extent in the so-called Dutch farmhouses of New York and New Jersey. Where lime was scarce, the interstices were stopped with clay; and the picturesque overhanging roof of the Dutch farmhouse is said to have had its origin in the need to protect these clay-filled walls from the weather. Stucco was occasionally used in Philadelphia, and was not uncommon around New York. Indeed, the Dutch farmhouse sometimes presented a queer patchwork of stone, brick, stucco, shingles, and clapboards, as though it were a sort of sampler in materials. Brick was made in the Colonies from an early date; in Virginia from the beginning. But although it was used for churches and public buildings, and a few large houses, the scarcity of lime, and a prejudice against masonry construction on account of dampness, caused its use to be restricted chiefly to the building of chimneys and ovens.

The early houses were generally one room deep. The typical Rhode Island house had one room on the ground floor; that of Connecticut and Massachusetts had two, with the chimney between them. In Virginia the typical house was of two rooms, but instead of a central chimney there were two, one at either end of the house. As more space was needed, the house was enlarged, usually by the addition of a lean-to at the back. Later on this lean-to became an integral part of the building; later still it disappeared altogether, and the house was built with a depth of two rooms on both the first and second floors. Toward the end of the century the gambrel roof replaced the steep mediæval roof, thus allowing more space in the

upper chambers without raising the roof-ridge. In the Dutch farmhouse, the gambrel roof was a characteristic feature, as was also the lengthening at the eaves. Ceilings were low, as in the restricted spaces of the mediæval walled towns; and there was often the second-story overhang that the builders of those towns had devised in order to encroach upon the space above the narrow streets. It was not needed in the wide stretches of the new land; nevertheless custom caused it to be perpetuated; for men do not depart all at once from the ways they have known, but gradually, as they accustom themselves to changed conditions. In surviving houses of that period one sometimes finds brackets under the overhang, and turned pendants at its corners; but one looks in vain, of course, to find the brackets embellished with the cherubs, or heads of saints, or weary little crouching caryatids, that delight one so in houses of the same type in the old towns of Europe.

The windows were grouped asymmetrically, following the varying sizes of the rooms. Sometimes they were provided with heavy shutters in lieu of glass—a dictate of poverty that must have caused gloom and inconvenience during the long, hard winters. Oiled paper also served as a frequent substitute for glass. Where glass was used, it was in small leaded panes, square or diamond-shaped, fitted into hinged casements. Inside, the great oak or pine frame of the house was frankly exposed, and chamfered or moulded for decorative effect. The joints of the wide sheathing boards were also moulded. The walls were not invariably sheathed, although the practice became general in New England, for the sake of warmth. A plaster of clay daub was sometimes used—very generally in Virginia—to cover three sides of the room, the sheathing being confined to the fireplace wall. Where

lime was available, this daub was coated with whitewash. The flooring was of wide sawn planks. The fireplaces were enormous—so large that benches were sometimes placed within them on either side—and so wide was the flue that most of the heat from the blazing log fire went up the chimney, leaving the room icy in winter even a short space from the hearth.

They were not pretentious, these seventeenth-century houses, save for a few, like Bacon's Castle with its stepped and curved gable-ends and its high chimneys, or the Governor Eaton house in Connecticut (long since disappeared), in the E-shape common to many mediæval English houses. But they had a charm which was never recaptured in the formally designed houses of the classic revival; a charm that is not to be accounted for by the use of such sentimental terms as "quaint" and "picturesque." They were neither. They were dynamic; for they were built not in terms of a dead formula, but in terms of the life that was to be lived in them. The introduction of a higher standard of comfort in the eighteenth century was the logical outcome of improvement in the economic situation of the Colonists. But the change in style had no more to do with the spirit of the people than it had had in the countries of Europe. In "the transference of emphasis from functional considerations to those of pure form," and that form borrowed from a vanished civilization, the peoples of the Western world really attempted to engraft an alien mode upon their culture. This borrowing, though it left scope for ingenuity in the adaptation of the borrowed mode, precluded the exercise of a truly creative genius so long as it should last. In the mediæval architecture, form was a traditional adaptation to function, an adaptation which represented the spontaneous expression of the spirit of

the northern peoples. Therefore it expressed the life of those peoples; and in the measure that any art expresses life, it becomes itself a living thing.

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In furnishing their houses the Colonists were at first thrown almost entirely upon their own resources. The wealthier ones brought their furnishings with them, and continued to import their choice possessions. The poorer ones, who formed the large majority, brought the indispensable utensils and tools, and relied for other objects upon such makeshifts as their ingenuity could devise. Little furniture is mentioned in the early inventories, and the low valuations placed upon most of what was mentioned seem to indicate that it was home-made. As Colonial prosperity increased, and ships more often made the long crossing from England, there was more importation. In the South, where the whole population soon centered its interest in tobacco culture, it became the rule to import, and such efforts as were made to stimulate domestic manufacture bore little fruit. It was convenient to import, and cheaper, since craftsmen were few, wages high, and tobacco a valuable staple which could be exchanged directly in the English market for manufactured goods. The North, on the other hand, had no such staple; and after 1650 the English duties on Colonial agricultural products, designed to protect English farmers, forced the Colonists of New England to find roundabout ways to meet their bills for English goods. "The trade of New England," says an early writer, "consisting chiefly in Fish, provisions, and lumber, exported to his Matys Southern plantations in America and to the dominions of the King of Spain in Europe. The returns from the former are made in Sugar, tobacco and other Commodi-

ties of the Growth of those Parts, which are again reshipped to England, and thereby imploy a double navigation; but from Spain are brought Pieces of Eight. . . ." It was important for the Northern Colonists to reduce an indebtedness so difficult to discharge, by developing their own industries.

This was easier than in the South, for the difficulty of tillage in the stony New England fields, and its small returns, made industry more attractive. As the coast settlements turned to fishing, trade, and shipbuilding, craftsmanship received a sharp impetus. The industry of shipbuilding notably affected craftsmanship. Many an old New England house bears the imprint of the ship's carpenter in the carving and paneling of its interior.

Colonial craftsmanship, therefore, was from the first a Northern development. Of the examples on view in American museums, the greater number, especially of the early period, are from New England. Much good work was done in Pennsylvania, but as that Colony was not settled until 1682 one would look in vain there for very early examples of the industrial arts. There was a good deal of seventeenth-century work in New Amsterdam, differing considerably from that of New England, as was natural in view of its close connection with Holland and also with East India through the West India Company's control of East Indian trade. Because of these influences, the inventories of New Amsterdam speak of wicker furniture, ebony chairs, and East India cabinets, at a time when New England was producing chests, wainscot chairs, and press cupboards. The high chest of drawers, which originated in Holland, is also first mentioned in the New York records.

The seventeenth-century interior, even when its furnishings were limited to indispensable objects, must have

been so crowded with these as to leave little room for circulation. The "hall" or kitchen contained, in addition to the brass and copper utensils of its great fireplace, its settle, table, chairs, and benches, the various implements used in spinning and weaving, brewing, and the making of butter and cheese. Besides these there was a variety of tubs, barrels, and buckets. Hams and bacons hung in the chimney; dried apples and hands of seed-corn were suspended from the ceiling. All of which bears witness to a great deal of industry and inconvenience.

What strikes one most in early inventories of the other rooms, is the number and variety of the beds they contained. The large four-poster stood in the parlor, and on its covering and hangings the housewife expended much thought and skillful labor. The hangings were often richly embroidered in the various stitches and designs with which Colonial women had been familiar at home. Or they might be of plain woolen material, or occasionally of silk. Frequently they were made of those beautiful Indian cotton stuffs, painted with the tree-of-life design, with its gorgeously plumed birds, which were very much in vogue in Europe and America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Since the rugs of that day were used for beds and tables instead of floors, the bed would have a Turkey-work rug, or perhaps a woven coverlet of the kind that is still made in gay colors and complex designs, among the Southern mountaineers. Or the covering, instead of rug or woven coverlet, might be of embroidery to match the hangings. But though the great four-poster in all its finery might dominate the room, its effectiveness was no doubt diminished by the proximity of more plebeian types of bed—as in the parlor of Captain Francis Matthews of York, Vir-

ginia, which contained a large bed, a flock bed, and a trundle bed.

Besides the beds there were low chests, desk-boxes, heavy cupboards, stools and forms, and various kinds of tables and chairs. This seventeenth-century furniture was rectangular in form, and rather heavy. It was stoutly built and the ornament was subordinated to the structure, never combined with it as in the furniture of later periods. This is to say that in furniture as in architecture the consideration of form had not yet superseded that of function. Later on, under Continental influences, ornament would become an integral part of structure, as in the graceful cabriole leg of the Dutch and Chippendale tables, chairs, and highboys. Indeed, it would even be allowed to weaken structure in the heart-shaped or oval backs of Hepplewhite chairs. The means employed to decorate the early furniture were suited to the modest circumstances of the Colonists. Moulding, chamfering, appliqués of turned split spindles or turtle-backed bosses, simple flat or scratch carving, and painting; these were means suited to the ability of the carpenter, the less skilled cabinetmaker, or even the amateur. Simple as they were, they were often lavishly and effectively employed. But it would be futile to expect to find in early Colonial furniture the subtly modulated carving in relief which sometimes brings English and Continental furniture of this type near that line which separates the craft of the wood-carver from the art of the sculptor. The early craftsman, even the professional, was more modest in his attainments, and no doubt often worked with makeshift tools.

It may be noted that color was an important item in the decoration of the early chests and cupboards. The practice of painting furniture in black and brick red was

in the mediæval tradition. In the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum there is a fine example of this method in a chest of drawers which has a carved design painted in black, against a brick-red ground. Some pieces were decorated in flowing painted designs upon a dark ground. The chests of the Pennsylvania Germans, which preserved the mediæval type down through the eighteenth century, were commonly decorated after the Bavarian fashion, in gay colors, with inscriptions, dates, initials, and floral motifs usually composed of tulips and fuchsias. Among the Dutch families of New York and New Jersey, the *kas* or large linen chest with full length doors, which took the place of the New England cupboards, was usually built of pine and painted in large floral designs.

Color, indeed, played an important part in the interior of the period, and a large share of it was due to the skill and industry of Colonial women. From the washing, carding, spinning, and dyeing of the wool to the finished product, many of the textiles were the work of their hands. The embroideries that found so many uses, from upholstery to wearing apparel, were highly valued; one finds frequent mention of them in the wills of the period. Hangings, cushions, and rugs were often richly embroidered in a variety of stitches. Turkey-work cushions, rugs, and chairs were frequently mentioned in the inventories. Turkey-work, it may be remarked, was made by drawing gay-colored yarns through a coarse fabric, knotting and cutting, in imitation of Oriental rugs. Later in the century russet leather was much used for upholstery. In the estate of the ill-fated Captain Kidd of New York, in 1692, there were one dozen Turkey-work chairs, one dozen double-nailed and as many single-nailed leather chairs. Mrs. Elizabeth Digges of Virginia, a lady

of social standing in the Colony, had in her parlor nine Turkey-work chairs, and eleven others with arrows worked in the cloth of the seats, besides one embroidered and one Turkey-work couch. The bright rugs and upholsteries, and the cushions of embroidery, damask, silk, or velvet in tender shades of blue, green, and red, supplied, with the ever-popular Indian chintzes, a considerable richness and variety of color.

The decorative rôle of metals is not to be overlooked. In every house of any pretensions to comfort, the cupboard had its dress of silver or pewter. Brass kettles, ladles, skimmers, andirons, and candlesticks added their note of gleaming color to the room. The early pewter was imported; it could be had so cheaply in England that there was little stimulus to domestic manufacture. The brass, too, came from England. Indeed, little work in brass was done here before the latter part of the eighteenth century. But silversmithing attained a higher artistic standard than any other Colonial industry, and silversmiths were important members of the community, from John Hull, master of the mint, to the famous Paul Revere.

The work of the Colonial smiths was not as elaborate as the plate in use among the great English families; the comparative modesty of Colonial fortunes precluded that; but it was of excellent workmanship nevertheless, and though simpler than the English plate, followed it in form and decoration, save in New York, where the Dutch influence was strong throughout the century. There were no banks in those days, and so the "Pieces of Eight" which flowed into New England from its trade with his Spanish Majesty's dominions were often melted up and fashioned into tankards, bowls, porringers, and other useful articles. A surprising quantity of plate is listed in

the inventories even of estates moderate in size. Yet in spite of the large amount that the records show to have been in the possession of seventeenth-century families, silver of that period is excessively rare today, for as the styles changed, the Colonists had their silver melted down and refashioned. The early forms were simple, as in the furniture of the period. The ubiquitous tankard, for example, was a large vessel, with straight sides, amply curved handle, and hinged lid. The means of decoration were as simple as the forms, consisting of mouldings, simple repoussé, rather crude engraving, and small cast details. Later on, as structural curves appeared in furniture, the style was reflected in silver vessels. Where the sides had been straight, they were now gracefully curved, and inkwells, pitchers, teapots, and other objects were mounted on tiny legs which repeated the curve of the cabriole leg on tables and chairs.

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These plain, simply furnished, seventeenth-century houses, transplanted shoots of European mediævalism, were harbingers of a mighty growth. Under their roofs pulsed a vigorous energy of life that was to transform a wilderness with breath-robbing swiftness. Within the crowded rooms, with their unpainted wainscot sheathing, their gay-colored damasks and embroideries, their hearth-fires drawing warm reflections from silver, pewter, and brass, were discussed and determined measures of Colonial economy, politics, and military enterprise which were full of significance for the future of the new people that would spring from the transplanted stocks of Europe. Here began industries that would broaden later into commercial enterprises attracting wealth from remote corners of the earth.

As this activity developed and broadened in scope, its effect was evident in a greater show of material well-being, in higher standards of building and furnishing, and in the more exacting demands on craftsmanship which these standards imposed. It was also evident in new influences on industrial art, derived from commercial contact with Europe and the Orient, influences which introduced new elements of form and decoration that were happily combined in the best industrial art of the eighteenth century. This transition belongs to the last few years of the century. The traditional articles of furniture tended to become lighter in form. The low, heavy chest with its hinged lid gave way to the high chest of drawers, set on straight turned legs. The desk box, with drawers added beneath, was also mounted on legs, and thus began its evolution toward the form with which we are at present familiar. The heavy rectangular cupboard tended to disappear, and so did the seventeenth-century wainscot chair with its carved paneled back and seat and turned members. The high, narrow, cane-backed chairs with their elaborate Flemish-scroll carving, that were introduced into England late in the century, made their appearance in the Colonies, as likewise did their companion pieces, the cane-backed sofas. Tea services of pewter and silver came into use with the fashion of tea-drinking imported from China; and the small size of the early teapots is eloquent of the fact that in those days tea was an expensive luxury.

As one wanders through the rooms devoted to the seventeenth century in the splendid American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum, one is impressed by the remarkable improvement in quality and craftsmanship that took place within a short half century. Many of the objects of the transition period bear the mark of the ex-

pert artisan; they are excellent in design and execution. Yet when one considers the poverty and the terrible hardships of the earliest Colonial life, the work of the earlier craftsmen is by no means unimpressive. These heavy chests and cupboards with their crudely elaborate decoration; these substantial silver vessels; these Turkey-work chairs and embroidered hangings that were the pride of the seventeenth-century housewife and the proof of her industry and skill; all these objects bear witness to that astonishing energy which in fifty years had covered miles of coast with villages and well-tilled farms, pushed the frontier far back into the fertile valleys of the interior, and levied tribute on the forests and the sea. They are impressive in their simplicity, even in their crudity; for they invite one to marvel that a people burdened with the task of subduing a hostile native population, and establishing the very rudiments of civilized life in a virgin land, found time and strength for even a tentative gesture toward the beautiful. They show the tenacity of tradition, the love of familiar things, the instinct of the exile to lessen his feeling of remoteness from home by reproducing as nearly as possible the conditions of the life he has left behind.

They remind one of Colonial women, working in the dimly lighted interiors and somehow finding time, in addition to the absorbing utilitarian activities of the Colonial household, to express at loom or embroidery frame their love of color and design; of amateur craftsmen laboring before the blazing hearths, during the comparative leisure of the winter months, upon useful articles into which they put the joy of creative effort; of local smiths who wrought for use but took advantage of the freedom of their craft, to put something of their souls into their work. These objects reflect the soul of seven-

teenth-century America, as the soul of man is reflected in every object he creates. Joint products of necessity and love, they give mute but eloquent testimony to its nostalgia, its energy, and its pride.

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As the Colonies prospered, the wealth of the self-constituted Colonial aristocracy enabled it to indulge with considerable freedom the innate human love of fine possessions. This aristocracy exercised its political and social authority from great plantations in the South, from shipyards and counting-houses in the North. The economic basis of its power was chattel slavery and bonded labor. "It seems probable," say the Beards, "that at least half the immigrants into America before the Revolution, certainly outside New England, were either indentured servants or negro slaves." The large immigration of indentured workmen demonstrated the abject condition of the masses in Europe, and the cynical attitude of the classes in America toward the exploitation of human labor. In view of this attitude, it is not surprising that Colonial aristocrats kept inferiors in their place with an arrogant firmness worthy of their English exemplars; one of the chief means to this end being, ironically, their ability to overawe the commonalty by a parade of elegance made possible through their control of the wealth the commonalty produced.

Back of the coast settlements was developing a life that differed from both the plantation system of the South and the mercantile system of the North. The later immigrants—Irish, Scots-Irish, Germans—who found the coast lands pre-empted on their arrival, and native sons crowded out of the original settlements; these carried the freehold system into the interior. Facing the West rather

than Europe, remote from centers of trade, and having no such sources of wealth as great plantations or maritime enterprise, these settlements could make no such cultural pretensions as the older communities. Such examples of their craftsmanship as survive reflect styles which lingered on in the interior long after they had gone out of fashion in the centers along the coast, and their material and execution betoken the modest means and requirements of their possessors. The finest Colonial craftsmanship, that which combined luxury with utility, was to be found in the prosperous seaport towns, where furniture, silver, textiles, and glass were fashioned for local use and intercolonial trade.

In these centers of population and on the great plantations arose mansions in which the mediæval tradition was abandoned in favor of the classical forms that had come into use in England in the seventeenth century. Since the classical mode was based upon archæological research rather than upon a traditional adaptation of form to function, the first requisite for its use was a knowledge of books. With the classical revival, therefore, entered the professional architect, whose knowledge depended upon research where that of the master-builder depended upon his familiarity with the traditions, tools, and materials of his craft. As the demand for classical correctness grew, the builder came gradually to occupy the position of a mere executant. That free play of imagination in the execution of details which had been the prerogative of the carpenter, the wood-carver, and the stonecutter since the days of the cathedral builders, gradually yielded place to mere copying of designs borrowed by the architect from books. As opportunities for display of skill increased, therefore, those for the exercise of originality became fewer. Thus, even before the industrial revolu-

tion, was begun that divorce of design from execution that was made absolute in the era of the machine.

The transition was gradual. During the Colonial period there was no attempt at reproduction of classical models. The Colonists adapted to their uses the Georgian mode that prevailed in England, based on the Palladian style followed by Inigo Jones, and lightened by the baroque elements that Sir Christopher Wren had introduced—the most prominent being the broken and scroll pediments which often replaced the more severely classical form over doorways, windows, and chimney pieces. The professional architect did not appear at once; but the gentlemen of the time prided themselves on their possession of books on architecture, and on the knowledge which enabled them to furnish plans for public and private buildings. John Kearsley, Peter Harrison, and others supplied designs for churches modeled on those built in London by Wren after the great fire. Andrew Hamilton designed Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Harrison, whose knowledge was much in demand, furnished the plan for the Redwood Library and the Market or Town House, at Newport. Later in the century, Thomas Jefferson was his own architect and builder, furnished plans to several of his friends, adapted the Virginia State Capitol from the Maison Carrée at Nîmes, and crowned his labors as architect by designing the University of Virginia.

The first signs of change appeared late in the seventeenth century. Under the Dutch influence, then strong in England, brick came to be the most favored building material, although both wood and stone continued to be used in some of the finest mansions. The doubling of the rooms made the plan foursquare. The stories were heightened, and the gambrel roof made its appearance, to

be followed later by decked and hipped roofs. The asymmetrical grouping of windows gave way to a formal spacing, and the hinged casement with its leaded panes was supplanted by the sliding-sash window with wooden bars. Level cornices emphasized the horizontal lines of the classical as opposed to the vertical thrust of the Gothic mode.

In the interior, the changes were in the direction of greater comfort and privacy. The central chimney, which impeded circulation, tended to be abandoned, and the center of the house was converted into a spacious hall which gave ready access to the rooms on either side. The doubling of the rooms permitted differentiation of function. The mediæval combination of kitchen with dining-room, and parlor with bedroom, disappeared from the better houses, as it had disappeared in Europe. In the South, the mild climate permitting, the kitchen had early been housed apart in its own building. The structural elements were no longer exposed, as in the seventeenth-century house. Ceilings were plastered; and paneling replaced the wide sheathing boards. Fireplaces diminished in size, and were encased in moulding or surrounded by gay-colored tiles.

The mansions of the eighteenth century were marked by a pronounced uniformity throughout the Colonies. Among the smaller dwellings, the work of the carpenter builders, the old traditions lingered well down through the century, and local differences in style and material were sometimes sharply marked. The Connecticut Valley house, for example, with its mediæval framing and its imperfectly understood classical detail, is quite a different building from the low Dutch farmhouse with gambrel roof, overhanging eaves, and dormer windows, or the Pennsylvania house of ledge stone. But among

The Georgian Vernacular

Hamilton. Independence Hall, Philadelphia

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

the larger houses, whether in the Northern cities or on the Southern plantations, there was a marked general similarity both in plan and in construction, as was natural in an age when houses were built by the book, and that book the same in all communities; and while the decorative detail might differ widely, the differences were individual, not sectional.

Whether the material used was brick, stone, or wood, the method of treatment was the same. If quoins were called for in decorating the façade, they were made of wood as readily as of stone; and the "rustication" or grooving through which further enrichment was attained, was practiced not only in stone but imitatively in wood. Where elaborate treatment was desired on cornices and the enframements of doors and windows, these were usually of wood even where the rest of the building was of masonry, for the stone found in the Colonies was refractory, and stone carvers were few. Sometimes, as in the Usher-Royall house at Medford, Massachusetts, the brick walls were encased in wood, to permit of elaborate treatment.

The early Georgian house was rather severely plain. There was little elaboration of the individual elements, possibly because they were as yet little understood. But as soon as the essentials of the mode were established, this elaboration began. Windows and doors were enframed, with richly carved friezes and pediments often supported by consoles or an order. The horizontal lines of the exterior were emphasized by placing a balustrade just above the cornice or along the curb that separated the roof slopes. Often the façade was further enriched by the application of colossal orders rising from ground or pedestal to the cornice. The introduction of arched doorways about the middle of the century gave occa-

sion for those beautiful fan-lights which were a distinctive feature in houses of the late Colonial and early Republican periods. The use of detached columns instead of pilasters converted the door enframement into a portico, which reached its ultimate development in the colossal portico of the early Republic, rising majestically from ground to cornice, and giving an effect of classic splendor to the outside of the house at considerable expense of light in the interior.

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Inside as outside, the treatment became more elaborate. Chimney breasts were encased in paneling sometimes enriched with carving. The mantel-shelf—where there was one—was of wood or imported marble, supported by consoles or an order. Cornices were elaborately carved and the panels of the wall were divided by pilasters rising the full height of the room. Doors and windows were surmounted by entablatures in which the broken or scroll pediment often appeared even after it had been abandoned in the treatment of the exterior. Shell-backed cupboards were built into walls or corners. Just before the Revolution the influence of Chippendale brought into vogue the shell work derived from the French style of Louis XV; and elaborate Chinese frets and carved friezes and motifs of foliage and shell added a note of gayety to the rich carving of the prevailing mode. Stairways were usually prominently placed and became the most important decorative feature of the house. The curve of their upward swing was often original and beautiful. The balusters, and the brackets at the ends of the treads, gave wide scope to the wood-carver's skill. Ceilings, too, were now ornamented with mouldings, shell work, coats of arms, rosettes, and festoons.

Wall surfaces were decorated in several ways. Sometimes they were painted. Rarely the paneled surfaces were decorated with mural paintings, as in the vanished Clark-Frankland house in Boston or the drawing-room from Marmion, Virginia, in the Metropolitan Museum. Or the walls might be hung with fabrics or with paper. Advertisements in the newspapers of the time are the best authority for Colonial practice. One in the Boston *Gazette* in 1736 advertised for sale a house which had "a Stair Case handsomely Wainscoted, also Three of the lower Rooms, two Chambers in the first Story hung with Scotch Tapestry, the other Green Cheney, the upper Chambers well plaistered and white wash'd." In the same paper, in 1754, a house was advertised in which "four of the said Rooms is cornished and the House is handsomely painted Throughout, one of the Rooms is painted Green, one Cedar and one Marble; the other four a Lead Colour."

There were frequent advertisements of both painted and printed wall papers; and such of these papers as have withstood the ravages of time show considerable variety and beauty of design and color. Many of them simulated mural paintings, with representations of hunting scenes, landscapes, classic ruins, or stories from classical mythology. Of these last, for example, are the famous panels of Cupid and Psyche, or The Adventures of Telemachus. The Chinese vogue is evident in an example in the Metropolitan Museum, which has a design of Chinese landscape with pagodas, birds, flowers, and figures; and the ubiquitous Indian chintz is imitated in another which shows the tree of life, with birds which were cut out separately and pasted, their number and placing, one assumes, being left to the taste of the owner.

Most of these papers were imported; but domestic

papers were often advertised, and merchants attempted to appeal to Colonial pride in soliciting patronage for the local makers. In the Pennsylvania *Chronicle,* in 1768, appeared an advertisement of "American PAPER HANGINGS manufactured in Philadelphia of all kinds and colours, not Inferior to those generally imported, and as low in price, Also PAPER MACHE or raised paper mouldings for hangings, in imitation of carving, either coloured or gilt." The curse of imitations is by no means exclusively modern. The advertiser goes on to argue that "as there is a considerable duty imposed on paper hangings imported here, it cannot be doubted, but that everyone among us, who wishes prosperity to America, will give preference to our own manufacture, especially on the above proposition *of equally good and cheap.*"

Carpets came into use for stairs and floors. In the announcements of goods for sale are listed Turkey, Persian, and Wilton carpets, as well as painted canvas floor coverings. The window hangings and the curtains and valences of beds were made, as in the previous century, of embroidered or printed linens or silks and damasks. Printing of linen was a local industry often advertised. In 1720, for example, an advertiser in the Boston *Gazette* offered for sale printed linen "without the offensive smell which commonly attends the Linens Printed Here."

As in the previous century, the handiwork of women was an important item in decoration. There were frequent advertisements in the newspapers of the time by those who were prepared to give instruction in "Works proper for young Ladies." These included drawing, painting on glass, japanning, working in wax, quill work, and feather-work, as well as the less doubtfully utilitarian arts of "plain Sewing, Irish stitch, Tent stitch, Sampler Work, Embroidery and all other Sorts of Needlework."

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Stiegel Glass

Courtesy of Hon. A. T. Clearwater. From the Clearwater Collection, on loan at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Early Silver — Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

The Turkey-work of the previous century was supplanted by *gros point* and *petit point,* which were used for upholstery, fire screens, cushions, and even pictures to be framed. Another substitute for the paintings which were rare in Colonial houses was the picture embroidered in long stitches, with spaces left for faces and hands, which were painted in. Or the sampler upon which some weary little beginner had proved her skill with her needle was framed and hung on the wall.

In furniture, as in architecture, the Colonial fashion followed that of England. The transitions from the style of William and Mary to that of Queen Anne, and from that to the Chippendale, were duly reflected in Colonial furniture. There were, however, two distinctly American developments. One was the block-front, which appeared first in Rhode Island and was later made elsewhere in New England. The fronts of secretaries, desks, chests of drawers, were alternately protruded and recessed in block form, the middle block recessed, those on the sides protruded. The blocks were left bare of ornamentation, save at the top where they were rounded off in the form of a shell, concave on the recessed, convex on the protruding sections. The high chest of drawers, which disappeared in England after the first quarter of the century, persisted in the Colonies and changed with the changing mode down to and through the Revolution. At first it was rather low and flat-topped, with cup-turned legs and stretchers. Later it increased in height to as much as seven feet, and was often surmounted with a scroll pediment and carved finials in the shape of torches, busts, or figures. In the Chippendale period the stretchers disappeared and the turned leg was replaced by a cabriole leg with ball and claw foot. This highboy was usually accompanied by a

companion lowboy or dressing table. The finest examples were made by Savery of Philadelphia, in mahogany or Virginia red walnut, embellished with carving in classical and Chippendale motifs that compares well with the best English cabinetmaking of the time.

Cabinetmaking in the eighteenth century, like architecture, followed books. The designs of Chippendale were published, and were widely copied or adapted by Colonial craftsmen. After the Revolution the designs of Hepplewhite and Sheraton furnished American cabinetmakers with designs in which the ample and sturdy forms of Chippendale, and his richly carved French, Gothic, and Chinese ornament, were supplanted by forms lighter and more delicate, with the straight lines and classic ornament dictated by the brothers Adam. Yet although American craftsmen followed the prevailing English modes, their adaptations often have originality and distinction, like Savery's adaptations from Chippendale, or Duncan Phyfe's later work in the classic modes of Hepplewhite and the Directoire.

Silver, pewter, wrought iron, and brass followed the prevailing fashions. Not again have metals been wrought into such beautiful forms as in the silver tea services, chafing-dishes, porringers, candlesticks, ladles, and other objects of this century; the brass warming-pans, sconces, andirons, candlesticks, furniture mounts; the wrought-iron gates and railings, hinges, knockers, and utensils. It was the heyday of the craftsman, his final glorious period of achievement, before the triumphant invasion of his province by the industrial revolution.

Colonial potters and glass makers were less successful than other craftsmen in establishing their trade, because of the English government's jealous efforts to discourage them, and because of the influx of cheap foreign ware.

Two glass-works before the Revolution produced work of artistic merit. Caspar Wistar, in Salem County, New Jersey, brought glass-blowers from Holland, and established in 1739 a glass-works which, until the Revolution brought it to failure, produced, besides its chief output of bottles and window glass, the first flint glass made in America. This was fashioned into tableware of rich green, brown, or blue, or of a bluish golden opalescence. Finer, however, than the Wistar glass was that made at Manheim, in Pennsylvania, by Heinrich Wilhelm Stiegel, who came from the Rhineland in 1750. The glass-works founded by this extraordinary man was only one of several ambitious enterprises, among which was an iron foundry which turned out many of those stove-plates in use among the Pennsylvania Germans, which are valued today for their naïvely rendered Biblical scenes and German inscriptions. On Stiegel's appeared the words,

"Baron Stiegel ist der Mann
Der die Ofen machen kann."

For his glass-works he brought over German and English glass-blowers, who produced, besides ordinary glass for ordinary uses, the fine ware in amethyst, green, deep rich blue, or in clear glass etched or painted, which is prized by modern collectors above all other early American glass. It was prized in that day too, apparently, for the quality and color which made it fine enough for the table of the most fastidious Colonial family. Yet in spite of large profits from his glass, financial disaster overtook the ambitious and extravagant "baron." He was imprisoned for debt in 1774, and ended his life in poverty. With his failure the making of Stiegel glass came to an untimely end.

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Sporadic attempts to establish pottery on a profitable basis met with much the same fate as attempts to make glass. Not until the middle of the nineteenth century did the manufacture of fine pottery become commercially successful in America. The tableware used in the better Colonial and early Republican homes was imported from Holland, China, and above all from England. The simpler folk contented themselves with earthenware; and in the German settlements of Pennsylvania, this earthenware was a direct and charming expression of local taste and customs. The practice of decorating vessels of common clay by tracing designs on the surface with liquid clay of lighter color poured from a quilled cup, or scratching the designs through a casing of the light clay to the darker clay beneath, was brought from Germany by the German settlers. The designs, of the favorite tulips and fuchsias, or other flowers, birds, animals, human figures, and inscriptions, record something of the lives of the people and their habit of thought. In the fine collection which the Pennsylvania Museum owes to the rediscovery of this pottery by Dr. E. A. Barber, and his zeal in collecting it, are pieces which, in the quality of their design and the richness of their mottled greens and yellows, are delightful examples of a virile if homely popular art.

Another homely art which deserves mention is the so-called New England hooked rug, made by cutting woolen material in strips and drawing it in loops through a material of coarse weave. There is some difference of opinion concerning the time and place of its first appearance. It is generally regarded as an American product of Colonial origin; but there seems good reason to believe that, like other Colonial crafts, it was part of the European heritage. Although it is often spoken of as the New England hooked rug, the craft by no means

belonged exclusively to New England, or even to that part of America which eventually became the United States. Many beautiful old hooked rugs have been found in Canada. Several of the finest I have seen came from there—one having a design of three maple leaves in autumnal colors, another a border in which snowshoes were a prominent motif, and a third, in exquisite shades of brown and green, of a fawn against a background of landscape.

Whether or not it was originally or exclusively American, the hooked rug has had an interesting American development. It seems to have been chiefly made in humble homes, where it permitted a thrifty use of worn-out woolen clothing. It was made in a wide variety of designs and colors. There were floral and geometrical designs, the floral patterns being sometimes raised in relief against a background of solid color. There were semicircular doormats with the hospitable words, "welcome" and "call again." Or there were houses and bits of landscape, faithful representations, perhaps, of the scenes with which the makers were familiar; and there were innumerable representations of the domestic fowl and animals. In the whaling towns along the seacoast, marine views were favorite subjects, and many an old clipper ship, under full sail, moves proudly against the sky within the borders of an old hooked rug.

Like the craft of the hand-woven coverlet, that of the hooked rug never disappeared entirely, but was kept alive among the women of the Eastern rural sections, so that when the recent popular interest in American antiques brought it into fashion, it was not necessary to rediscover the method of working. The making of hooked rugs has become once more a popular household art, and enterprising women have found pleasure and

profit in helping the rural rug-makers to improve the designs of their work and dispose of it in the metropolitan markets. Occasionally, too, the hooked rug has become a medium for the expression of the modern spirit in decoration, to which it lends itself admirably; as, for example, in the beautiful rugs which Mrs. Bertram Hartman makes from the designs of her gifted husband.

§

During the Revolution there was the suspension of activity in architecture and industrial art that always accompanies a long war which interrupts the course of trade and absorbs the popular energies. When the war was over, the more ardent Republicans sought diligently to achieve cultural as well as political independence of England. They might have spared themselves the trouble. "The States of the Federation," say the Beards, "differed as much from the Colonial provinces of Governor Shirley's time as the France of Louis Philippe, hero of the green umbrella, did from the régime of Louis XV." The effect on architecture of this change in the national temper, I shall discuss in a later chapter.

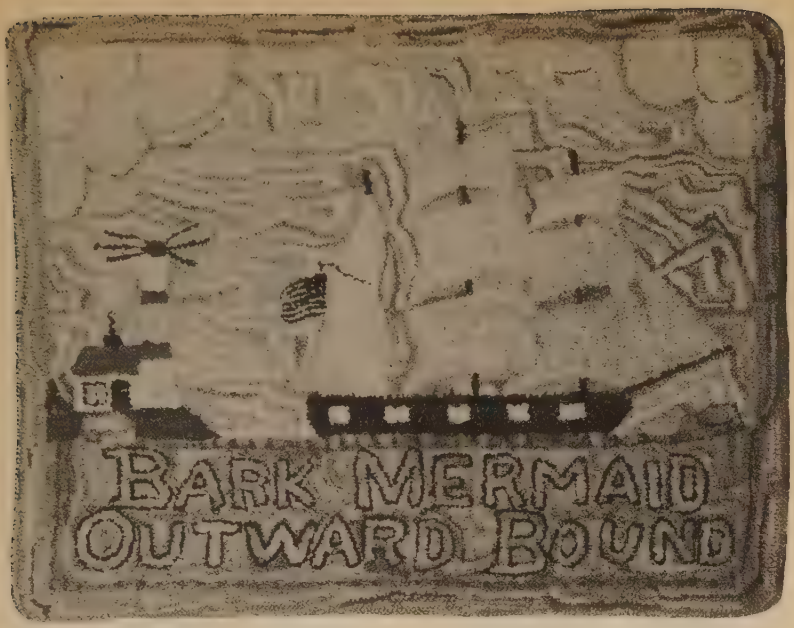
Chapter Two

Colonial Painters

THE early Colonists brought few pictures with them, and of those few the greater number were portraits. The pictures reproduced in Bolton's *Portraits of the Founders* give a good idea of the character of this imported art, and of much early Colonial painting. There are French portraits from the Huguenot families of North Carolina, Dutch portraits from New Netherland and Maryland, and English portraits from all the Colonies. Some of these have value as pictures, but most of them are chiefly valuable as historical documents. Many are interesting in design even where the realization of form is weak and amateurish. All of them, however, have interest as records of American graphic art in its earliest infancy. The Huguenot families of South Carolina, according to Bolton, "preserved more portraits in proportion to their number than any other race" in America. Among the Dutch settlers there appear to have been a number of paintings. Isham quotes a visitor to the de Peyster home as describing family portraits and scriptural scenes which decorated its walls; pictures probably of the Dutch school, which may have been good ones. He also mentions Jonas Bronck, "the shadowy eponymous hero of the Bronx," a prosperous burgher but no patroon, who left eleven pictures

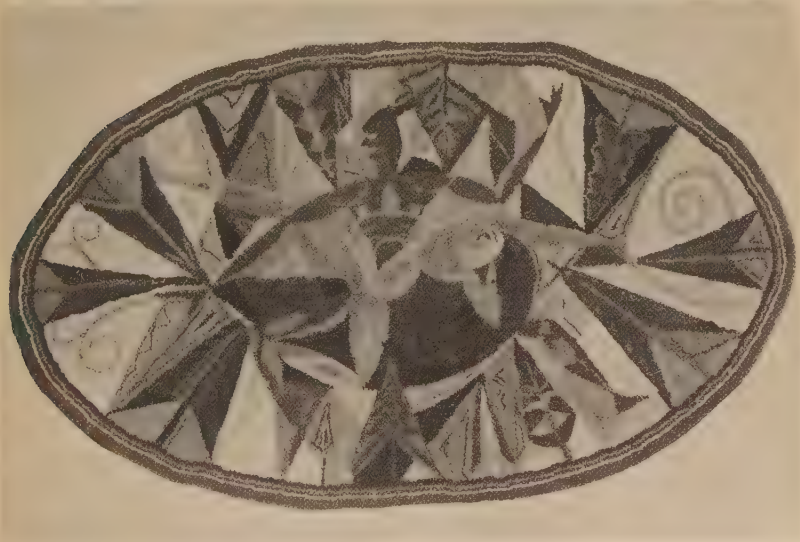
at his death. Colonel William Mosely, an English settler who had been a merchant in Rotterdam before emigrating to Virginia, had four family portraits from the hand of a skillful Dutch painter, all of which are reproduced in Bolton. Legend also attributes to his ownership a collection of earlier portraits beginning with the period of Henry II. The will of William Fitzhugh of Virginia, who died in 1701, mentions "my own and my wife's pictures and the other six pictures of my relations"; and Mrs. Digges of the same colony had in her parlor, along with the Turkey-work chairs and sofas, pictures appraised after her death at only five shillings—a valuation which argues badly for the taste of the appraisers, the quality of the pictures, or the state of the market for works of art. Notwithstanding the occasional importation of pictures, however, and the work of itinerant Colonial craftsmen, paintings were few in seventeenth-century America.

It was in keeping with the nature of Colonial beginnings, both religious and economic, that what painting was done in the Colonial period should belong almost exclusively to the utilitarian categories of coach and sign painting and the semi-utilitarian category of "effigies," as portraits are quaintly termed in the records of the early settlers. The Puritan fathers, however rigidly they might eschew such vanity as decorative pictures for their houses, or such "popery" as religious pictures for their churches, were not above the vanity (or perhaps one might more kindly say the sense of duty to their descendants) which prompted patronage of the "limner" who painted portraits. Indeed it was all they could afford; the new country was too poor to support important artistic effort. Although some of the finer houses of the eighteenth century were decorated with mural paintings, the practice was exceptional. Exceptional also was the interesting



Early Hooked Rug

Courtesy of Mrs. E. O. Schernikow



Modern Hooked Rug. Designed by Bertram Hartman; executed by Augusta Hartman

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

HESSELIUS. Mistress Anne Galloway

commission awarded on September 5, 1721, to Gustavus Hesselius "to draw ye history of our blessed Saviour and ye twelve Apostles at ye last supper" for the Church of St. Barnabas in Queen Anne Parish, Maryland.

Of those painters who braved the poverty of the new settlements, Isham says that "most of them probably learned their trade before coming to America, and renewed their inspiration from such prints and portraits as they could get a sight of. The result is about what one might expect an unskillful sign painter to produce when attempting to copy Sir Godfrey Kneller from memory." Some of these early portraits are quaintly amusing—like an equestrian portrait in the collection of the New York Historical Society, in which the grotesque disproportion between the subject's head and his body, and between these and his diminutive cavorting steed, reminds one of the hole-in-a-curtain photographs with which all boardwalk habitués are familiar. Few names of painters are known before the eighteenth century. William Read of Boston painted in 1641 the first known Colonial portrait, that of Richard Bellingham, Governor of Massachusetts, now in the collection of Mr. Thomas B. Clarke. Mrs. James Le Serurier of Charleston, South Carolina, painted in the late eighteenth century a few portraits which give evidence of some acquaintance with the Continental European tradition. Jeremiah Dummer, the versatile Boston silversmith, painted portraits of himself and his wife, signed and dated 1691. In 1684, according to Bolton, there came to Boston one Joseph Allen, of whom Nathaniel Mather wrote to Increase Mather: "This I send you by Mr. Joseph Allen. . . . He hath so strong a byass to ingenius handicrafts that he is thereby mastered . . . hee hath acquired good skill in watchmaking, clockmaking, graving, limning." From this testi-

mony to his versatility, one may infer that Mr. Joseph Allen was able to make a more prosperous living than he might have enjoyed had he been obliged to depend exclusively on "limning" in a new and poor country where commissions for portraits were likely to be few.

In New Amsterdam Jacobus Gerritson Strijcker, magistrate, trader, farmer and "limner," a man of culture and an important citizen, found time between his arrival in 1651 and his death in 1687 to paint a few portraits which show a keen eye for character and a respectable technique. Evert Duijkinck, of the same colony, was a painter and maker of glass who handed down his dual profession to his son Gerret. His grandsons, Gerardus and Evert third, were portrait painters. Another seventeenth-century painter of New Amsterdam was Henri Cousturier, who is known to have made "effigies" of Governor Stuyvesant and his sons. Thus the Colonies felt some direct influence from the Dutch tradition of portrait painting as well as the indirect influence which came through the later immigrants of the English school.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the prosperity which enabled the building of fine houses in the early Georgian vernacular enabled also the purchase of paintings and engravings to decorate their walls. The increased demand for graphic art was met by importation and by the work of native artists. European painters and engravers, either more adventurous or less successful than their colleagues at home, continued occasionally to visit the Colonies and sometimes to settle there; and because of their acquaintance with European tradition their work naturally exerted a strong influence upon the native painters. One of the earliest of these eighteenth-century immigrants was Gustavus Hesselius, who came in 1711 from Sweden to the Swedish settlement in Delaware, and

soon drifted on South, painting portraits sober in color, well drawn, and full of character. He was a painter of no mean ability, indeed, who had evidently studied in Italy, for his "Last Supper," rediscovered by Mr. Charles Henry Hart after more than a century of oblivion, shows Italian influence in conception and treatment. In this earliest American religious picture, the side of the table nearest the spectator is vacant, save for Judas, as in Leonardo's famous painting. The hand of Jesus is raised in the gesture that accompanied the announcement of his impending betrayal, and those of the disciples are disposed in a way that serves to indicate their emotion and at the same time to give a pleasing rhythm to the row of seated figures. The figure of Judas, half turned away from the Master toward the spectator as though in shame or fear, is skillfully drawn. Interest is centered upon the strongly lighted faces by the use of deep contrasting shadows. The work is obviously derivative; but at the time it was painted, Hesselius was almost certainly the only painter in the Colonies who could have executed such a group. Smibert's famous group portrait of Dean Berkeley and his family, painted only a few years later, is stiff and amateurish in comparison with it, and Feke's portrait of Sir Isaac Royall and his family gives evidence of that admirable painter's limitations in the difficult matter of combining figures.

John Hesselius, son and pupil of Gustavus but a less accomplished painter, worked in Philadelphia, Maryland, and Virginia, and finally settled in Annapolis where he became the first instructor of Charles Wilson Peale. Among early Southern painters may also be numbered the Englishman, Charles Bridges, recommended to Governor Spottswood of Virginia by Colonel Byrd in 1736. Another English immigrant, John Wollaston, painted fair portraits

in Philadelphia, Maryland, and Virginia in the middle of the century. Farther south, Jeremiah Theus enjoyed a virtual monopoly of painting in Charleston, South Carolina, after his arrival from Switzerland in 1739 until his death in 1774. He advertised himself as prepared to paint portraits, landscapes, and crests or coats-of-arms for coaches and chaises. Many of his portraits are still in possession of the sitters' families, precious heirlooms which convey the impression that the aristocrats of South Carolina in his day all looked amazingly alike.

Although the best Colonial portraits are those of painters who found patronage among the Southern planters and the commercial aristocracy of Charleston, South Carolina, and the New England seaports, there were some eighteenth-century painters in New York besides the Duijkincks. Lawrence Kilburn, soon after his arrival from London in 1754, advertised to "all ladies and gentlemen inclined to favour him in having their Pictures drawn, that he don't doubt of pleasing them in making a true likeness, and finishing the Drapery in the proper manner." Some fourteen years later John Durand, advertising in the New York *Journal* or the *General Advertiser,* saw fit to make an apology for historical painting; from which one might infer (if one did not already know it) that this branch of art had not the amount of support in Colonial America that artists might have desired for it. I know of no historical painting by this artist; but his extant portraits, although they are respectable enough for their time, are not such as to indicate that only opportunity was wanting to make him the first important American historical painter. His contemporary, William Williams, was more modest in his claims. He devoted himself to portraiture, working not

Courtesy of the Bowdoin Museum of Fine Arts

FEKE. Mrs. James Bowdoin

Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

BLACKBURN. Mrs. Simpson

only in New York but in the South and in Philadelphia, where he became the first instructor of Benjamin West.

Where Robert Feke of Newport got his schooling is not known. He is said to have been American by birth, of a family which came from England to the Massachusetts Bay Colony with Governor Winthrop. It is hard to believe that he could have attained the proficiency shown in his pictures from such meager sources of artistic inspiration and knowledge as his native city must have afforded between the date of his birth in 1705 and that of his first signed canvas, 1729. Yet there is good authority for the assumption that this was the case. Dr. Alexander Hamilton, who met him in 1744, wrote that . . . "Dr. Moffatt . . . carried me to see one Feake, a painter, the most extraordinary genius ever I knew, for he never had any teaching. . . . This man had exactly the phiz of a painter, having a long pale face, sharp noze, large eyes with which he looked upon you steadfastly, long curled black hair, a delicate white hand, and long fingers." What is perhaps more to the point, he had the mind of a painter, for his works, which have often been attributed to Copley, are certainly better than those of any other Colonial painter of his time. His figures are well placed upon the canvas, firmly and gracefully drawn, and painted with a brush which took exact note of the textures of flesh, satin, and velvet, the delicate ivory tint and intricate patterns of fine laces. But he lacked Copley's truth of characterization. With one or two exceptions, the faces of his sitters have a certain sameness of feature and expression, and their hands, gracefully posed and well modeled, are all alike. Yet what beautiful forms he knew how to build up of the stiff and uncomfortable eighteenth-century feminine costume!—the spreading folds of the satin skirt, the column of the tightly laced

torso, the bell-like sleeves, and the square-cut neck revealing the subtle curves of the breasts.

While Feke, in Newport, was painting pictures which make one suspect that he had somehow had opportunity to become familiar with English portrait painting of the time, a painter who had studied in both London and Italy arrived in America with Dean Berkeley, in pursuance of the latter's ill-starred plan to found a college of arts and sciences in Bermuda. The funds which the Parliament had appropriated to the enterprise were seized by the Prime Minister for the dower of a royal princess, and the Dean was obliged to return to England. John Smibert, however, remained in this country and settled in Boston, where he continued to paint portraits until his death in 1751. Even the prestige of an excellent English reputation, however, does not seem to have ensured him a living, for in 1734 he advertised painting materials, frames, and prints for sale, and in May, 1735, he advertised for sale "a collection of valuable PRINTS, engrav'd by the best Hands, after the finest Pictures in Italy, France, Holland, and England, done by Raphael, Michelangelo, Poussin, Rubens, and the other greatest Masters, . . . being what Mr. Smibert collected in the above-mentioned countries." Smibert also brought with him some copies in oil from European masters. His copy of Van Dyck's head of Cardinal Bentivoglio, in the library of Harvard college, was studied by Trumbull and Allston. "At that time," wrote Allston many years later, "it seemed to me perfection; but when I saw the original some years afterwards, I found I had to alter my notions of perfection. However, I am grateful to Smibert for the instruction he gave me—his work rather. Deliver me from kicking down even the weakest step of an early ladder."

For his country and time, Smibert was a good painter. His work is rigid, and the drawing of eyes never ceased to trouble him, but his sitters live on the canvas with considerable vitality. It is worthy of note that he turned architect long enough to design Faneuil Hall. His painting is supposed to have been a source of instruction for the youthful Copley, for it is known that he was on intimate terms with Copley's stepfather, Peter Pelham.

Another painter who is supposed to have taught or influenced Copley was Joseph Blackburn, who arrived in New York from Bermuda in 1753 and painted portraits of the commercial and official aristocracy of New England from 1755 to 1763, when he disappears. His portraits, like Feke's, have often been attributed to Copley, but Blackburn had neither Copley's strength nor his power of characterization. Indeed his work bears more general resemblance to Feke's than to that of the younger painter. His pictures are usually in three-quarter length, as many of Feke's were, with a glimpse of landscape in the background, or the Greek pillars which remind one that the classic revival was well under way by the middle of the eighteenth century. He also excelled in rendering the textures and folds of draperies, the frills of muslin and lace—and in the modeling of interchangeable hands; a practice not unusual among these early painters, who usually painted draperies and hands without having the sitter before them. Blackburn's portraits have distinction, and if his characterization never attained the profundity of Copley's, this is not because it was not good, but because Copley's was extraordinary.

§

When John Singleton Copley, the best painter produced by Colonial America, and one of the best America

has ever produced, was born in 1738 of parents who had come to Boston from Ireland the year before, the city was the commercial and cultural center of New England. Its commerce was dominated by the sea and its culture by the church. William Burgis's "Prospect of the Harbour and Town of Boston in 1723" shows twelve meeting houses and churches, and fifteen shipyards. Probably the number of both had increased by Copley's time. The austerity implied by the churches was relaxing somewhat before the prosperity betokened by the shipyards. That the growing levity of manners was not allowed to go unprotested, however, is evident from a letter which appeared in the Boston *Gazette* of March 21, 1732, objecting to a proposed Assembly at Peter Pelham's dancing school. The writer wonders "what could give encouragement to so Licentious and expensive a Divertion in a town famous for its Decency and Good Order," and proceeds to cite the example of the early settlers. "When we look back upon the Transactions of our Forefathers, and read the Wonderful Story of their godly zeal, their pious Resolution, and their Publick Virtues, how should we blush and lament our present Corruption of Manners and Decay of Religious and Civil Discipline? . . . In vain will our Ministers preach Charity, Moderation and Humility, to an Audience, whose thoughts are engaged in Scenes of Splendour and Magnificence, and whose Time and Money are consumed in Dress and Dancing."

Despite the protests of the scandalized, however, the new mercantile aristocracy, its purses well lined with profits from ambitious enterprise, was turning at least a share of its attention to the luxuries and pleasures that money would buy. To what extent dancing consumed time and money one can only guess; from the protest quoted, it would seem to have been unusual. But that

Courtesy of Mr. John Langdon Erving

COPLEY. John Erving

Courtesy of the Brooklyn Museum

COPLEY. Elizabeth Goldthwaite

dress demanded a fair amount of both there is ample evidence to be found in the heavy silks and velvets, the powdered wigs, the ribbons, jewels, and fragile laces of the contemporary portraits. No doubt these ladies and gentlemen of Puritan New England enjoyed their wealth with due decorum—the evidence of the portraits is on the side of a firm respectability. None the less, they did not hesitate to indulge their love of elegance and beauty. At the time Copley was born, Thomas Hancock was building his mansion on Beacon Street, for which he wrote to order wall paper from London, saying that "if they can make it more beautifull by adding some more birds flying here and there, with some landskip at the bottom should like it well." The Clark-Frankland house, with its elaborately gilded and painted interior, had been standing for some time, as had the Hutchinson and Faneuil houses, and several other fine early Georgian mansions.

These houses were well furnished with portraits by foreign and American painters, and no doubt with some "fancy" pictures as well. Feke may have been painting in Boston at this time, and Smibert certainly was. So also was Peter Pelham, painter and engraver in mezzotinto (and school-teacher and dancing master by force of necessity), who became Copley's stepfather some years later. Nathaniel Emmons, native of Boston, died three years after Copley was born; a painter who, said the New England *Journal,* "was universally owned to be the greatest master of various sorts of painting that ever was born in this country [no exacting distinction]. And his excellent works were the pure effect of his own genius, without receiving any instruction from others."

Pictures were much less rare in the Boston of that day than during the seventeenth century. As early as 1712,

pictures from the cargo of the ship *St. Francisco,* captured at sea, were sold at public vendue. In 1720 there was advertised for sale a collection of pictures "fit for any Gentleman's dining room or staircase." The year after Copley was born, a "curious Collection of Dutch Paintings" was mentioned in an advertisement of household goods to be sold at auction. In 1730, "Pictures of their Majesties King George II, and Queen Caroline, beautifully drawn at length, are put up in the Council Chamber of this Town"; and in 1740 full length portraits of King William and Queen Mary, done in London at the charge of the Province, were added to these. When John Smibert advertised his collection of prints for sale in 1735, he announced that he would also sell "a Collection of Pictures in Oil Colours." There were several print shops by this time, advertising maps and prospects, which seem to have been much in demand, as well as engravings and pictures in oil.

It is evident, then, that Copley was fortunate in being born at a time when art, if not exactly flourishing, was at least not unknown to the people of his native city, and when the prosperity of its upper class permitted a rather liberal patronage of the portrait painter. He was fortunate too in having for stepfather a man who was himself a painter and a good engraver in mezzotint. "The household of Peter Pelham," says Perkins, "was perhaps the only place in New England where painting and engraving were the predominant pursuits." Pelham was, moreover, a friend of Smibert, and no doubt knew the other painters and engravers of Boston. All the artistic influences that the city afforded seem to have been brought into focus, by rare good fortune, upon this gifted young painter. The results of his exceptional opportunities are evident in his earliest work, which is remarkable for so

young an artist in so young a community. There is nothing childish in his early portraits of himself, his stepfather, and his stepbrother, painted when he was only thirteen or fourteen years old. Although they naturally do not show the mastery of his mature work, they reveal the qualities that made Copley a great painter: his keen observation, his honesty, and his power to render appearances exactly without losing breadth of effect. Even in the few miniatures painted during his early years these qualities stand out. As his art developed, they found greater scope, but they were his from the first, and his fortunate early experience ensured him—what so many American painters have lacked—a good foundation of knowledge and ample time in which to build upon it.

How well he built a large number of extraordinary portraits and a few historical compositions of high merit bear impressive witness. He became not only an excellent painter but a prosperous one. When he finally left America in 1774 he was not only incomparably the best American artist, but he was earning an excellent income. However, the political unrest which preceded the Revolution threatened his prosperity; he had warm invitations to London from his compatriot West and other English artists who admired the pictures he sent after 1766 to the annual exhibitions of the London Society of Artists; and besides, he longed to see the works of the masters. These considerations moved him to depart for Europe; and while he was traveling on the Continent his family fled the impending Revolution. He settled with them in London and remained there the rest of his life.

From 1774, then, until his death in 1815, he is to be numbered among the English painters. He continued to paint portraits; and stimulated perhaps by the success

of West, he also turned his attention to historical works. "The Death of Chatham," "The Death of Major Pierson," "The Offer of the Crown to Lady Jane Grey," "The Siege of Gibraltar," were a few of the subjects he chose to depict. Some of these were engraved, and the prints sold fairly well. "But," says Cunningham, "there has always been a difficulty in disposing of historical pictures in this country; and no one was doomed to experience it more than Copley." His historical paintings brought him more glory than profit. His vogue as a portrait painter declined toward the end of his life; and when he died in 1815, he was considerably in debt.

He was a slow and painstaking worker, according to his biographers, all of whom illustrate the point with one version or another of the story about his portrait of the Knatchbull family, begun in 1801 and finished in 1807. The story was that the gentleman remarried twice during the painting of the picture, and had several more children, so that the canvas had to be changed repeatedly and was each time further delayed. For a head alone Copley is said to have required as many as sixteen sittings of six hours each. Such things are not important, save to the exasperated sitter. All that really matters is the result; and his results were well worth the laborious hours spent in attaining them. He is in famous company here: Titian is said to have required as many as ninety sittings for one portrait; and Ingres worked for no less than two years on his great portrait of Mme. d'Haussonville.

One reason for Copley's slow tempo was given in a letter to Dunlap by the painter C. R. Leslie, who said that "when painting a portrait he used to match with his palette-knife a tint for every part of the face, whether in light, shadow, or reflection. This occupied himself and the sitter a long time before he touched the canvas."

Such a practice, although it may seem a bit over-literal, supports the evidence to be found in his paintings themselves, of the searching honesty that was one of his greatest qualities. His sitters are depicted with what one feels must have been an exact fidelity not only to the varying tints of the flesh, but to the complexion of the mind as well. Whether he have before him a thoughtful middle-aged man, a cheerful keen-minded old woman, a thin-lipped and austere divine, or a dashing and not too intelligent young beauty, he renders the character of each as he records the wrinkles of a face, the tint of a bosom veiled by fine lace, the subtle modeling that gives individuality to a hand. He never softens, he never compromises with appearances. He is a realist, and paints what he sees. His sitters, again, may have found this honesty exasperating; few of us, perhaps, would choose to be represented to posterity exactly as we are. But it is not only one of the qualities that made Copley an important painter; it is precisely the quality that saved him from succumbing to the empty facility of the English school. His later work shows the influence of his English colleagues in a more flowing line and greater freedom in the use of color; but of none of his work can it be said, as Faure said of Reynolds, that the forms are soft and spongy and the bodily structure of the same material as the dresses. The English school did not help Copley; he never surpassed the work he did in America. But it could not spoil him, for he had spent too many years developing his firm, austere, and literal art. I have mentioned Ingres; another characteristic in which Copley may be compared with the great French painter is his ability to include detail without making it obtrusive. "His Historical compositions," says Dunlap, "were laboured, polished and finished from the ermine and feather to the

glossy shoe and boot, or glittering star and buckle." The same thing may be said of his portraits. That it is not the labored and polished detail, however, that impresses the beholder to the detriment of the general effect, is an added evidence of the essential breadth of his conception and his handling.

Copley is to be counted as an English painter during only the latter half of his career. Benjamin West's whole career, although it began in this country, really belongs to the history of English rather than American painting, and would have no place in a discussion of American art if it were not for his peculiar relation to the American painters of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. West was born in the same year as Copley, of Quaker parents, near the small town of Springfield, Pennsylvania. The story of his early attempts to draw, and how he had from friendly Indians his first lessons in the preparation of colors, is known to every American school-child. He was singularly fortunate in finding friends who were sufficiently impressed by his talent to give him disinterested help in cultivating it; so that by the time he was twenty-one he was enabled to go to Italy to study. When he arrived in Rome his great personal charm and the romantic interest attaching to his situation—a young Quaker come from the wilds of North America to study painting—gave him immediate popularity. Again, in England, where he went after three years of travel and study in Italy, good fortune attended him so diligently that at the age of twenty-five he found himself established at the top of his profession. He remained in London, devoted himself chiefly to the painting of historical and religious pictures, became painter to George III, helped to found the Royal Academy and served for many years as its president, and died in 1820 after a life

of unremitting devotion to an art which he had greatly loved and little understood.

West was peculiarly fortunate in securing the royal patronage. "When Mr. West arrived in London," says Leslie, "the general opinion was so unfavorable to modern art, that it was scarcely thought possible for an artist to paint an historical or fancy picture worthy to hang up beside the old masters. Hogarth had produced his matchless pictures in vain. The connoisseur who would have ventured to place the inimitable scenes of the "Marriage à la Mode" on his walls (I mean the pictures; the prints were in great request) would have hazarded most fearfully his reputation for taste." English painting was in its heyday when West arrived in London; but English painting of the eighteenth century, to quote Faure, "gravitates around the peerage and is created for it. . . . It resembles the lords, it models itself from them." The lords demanded portraits; they patronized the portrait painter and left the landscapist to find his reward for his labor in the satisfaction of doing it. So likewise with the painter of religious and historical subjects: in spite of West's high position, he did not succeed in creating a demand for pictures calculated to "dignify man by transmitting to posterity his noble actions and his mental powers, to be viewed in those valuable lessons of religion, love of country, and morality." Aside from the royal patronage, his work did not bring him in as much as six thousand pounds in forty-eight years.

But for his royal patron he painted a great many pictures; many more, indeed, than was wise. His talent was unquestionable, but his inspiration was not adequate to what Gilbert Stuart called his "ten-acre canvases." In these large and carefully composed pictures, rhetoric too often serves for eloquence, and bombast for fervor. The

forms are often banal and the color is unpleasant. "Mr. West," says Dunlap, who was his pupil and devoted admirer, "perhaps made too great a distinction between the colouring appropriate to historical painting, and that best suited to portraits . . . [he] adopted what he considered an historical style of colouring, and the consequence is that now it is called quaker-like." He fell, in other words, into a characteristic error of the English school, the production of "museum art," which, in Faure's words, "consists in giving to fresh paint the appearance of the smoked and rancid paint of the great masters of oils." To so little purpose had he studied in Italy, where the great tradition was dead, and none was left who could understand and interpret the intention of the masters. He was an eclectic, moreover, who borrowed from earlier painters without assimilating, so that he was capable of bringing together in a single canvas figures derived at random from the Dutch, French, and Italian painters. Or he might paint a whole composition in the style of Raphael or of Rembrandt. Had he not regarded painting as primarily a means to instruction or edification, he might have had the artistic sincerity to learn from the great painters instead of merely borrowing. As it was, his work had much in it that was spurious. Today, little of all that he produced retains enough vitality to give it interest for the art lover. A century after his death he is all but forgotten. It takes a robust art to support the burden of a moral purpose. West's was not equal to the strain. Hence its fate in a world which asks of art not that it be either illustration or moral precept, but only that it be art.

One regrets the more that one cannot praise West's pictures, because he is one of the most sympathetic and engaging figures in the history of art. His great reputa-

Courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago

COPLEY. Brass Crosby

PEALE — Judge Robert Goldsborough and Family

Courtesy of Mr. Robert Goldsborough Henry

tion and his enjoyment of royal patronage seem never to have turned his head, as they might have turned the head of a man less well balanced. He became neither arrogant nor aloof, but remained always one of the most benevolent of men and one of the most accessible of artists. Each morning, before he started to paint, he received all those artists who wished to see him, and freely gave them his advice. Nor was this magnanimity confined to students: where a less generous nature might have feared a rival in an artist of Copley's attainments, West not only urged his compatriot to go to London, but offered him the hospitality of his own house. When Copley finally settled in London, West helped him to establish himself in his profession.

In a letter to George III, written late in life, after his work had been suspended by the Royal architect during the King's temporary insanity, West said of himself: "I have been zealous in promoting merit, ingenious artists have received my ready aid, and my galleries and my purse have been opened to their studies and their distresses." A long line of American artists who received gratuitous instruction from him have left their testimony to the justice of this claim. One may regret his influence on American painting; but at the same time one must revere his memory for the disinterested kindness that always marked his relations with his fellow artists.

§

Perhaps it was Benjamin West's meteoric rise to fame that inspired another Pennsylvanian to seek instruction in Italy only a few years after the first student from the American wilds had aroused the curious interest of Roman society. Henry Benbridge of Philadelphia was encouraged and assisted in his chosen profession by a

wealthy stepfather. He appears to have been either taught or influenced by Wollaston before his departure for Italy. He spent several years in Rome, and progressed so well that in 1768 he was commissioned by James Boswell to go to Corsica and paint a full-length portrait of the famous Corsican patriot, General Pascal Paoli, afterward exhibited at the Royal Academy, and engraved in mezzotint. In 1770 he returned to America after a year spent in London, and soon after settled in Charleston, South Carolina, where for years he painted portraits whose excellence has caused them to be often attributed to Copley. His work, which is uneven, at its best merits comparison with Copley's although it falls short of Copley's mastery and distinction. The figures are well drawn, and sometimes beautifully modeled. In color he affected the brownish tints of the Italian school, with opaque shadows; although some of his later work is in higher key. So, of course, are his miniatures, which are remarkably strong in modeling and in the faithful rendition of expression and character.

The first of West's long line of pupils was Matthew Pratt of Philadelphia, who began his career as apprentice to his uncle, James Claypoole, from whom he "learned all the branches of the painting business"—a statement which moved Dunlap to comment on the degraded state of the arts in Colonial America, though the attitude it betrayed had excellent precedent among Italian painters in a period when art was quite the opposite of degraded. Having made portrait painting his favorite study from the age of ten, Pratt was no beginner when he went to London in 1764. After four years of study he returned to Philadelphia where he painted competent portraits, and eked out an uncertain income by executing signs which were highly praised by laymen and artists.

While Pratt was a student in the atelier of West, Charles Wilson Peale of Maryland joined "the American School"—an ingenious, versatile, and enterprising spirit who had been a saddler, coachmaker, clock-maker, and silversmith before the pictures of one Frazier inspired him to add portrait painting to his other accomplishments. Some instruction from John Hesselius and a visit to Copley in Boston preceded his departure for London, where Benjamin West not only gave him instruction but took him into his own house when the young painter's funds ran low—a service which Peale repaid by assisting with the huge canvases of his benefactor. But he did not study only historical painting or portraiture in oil during his two busy years in London; he found time to become a good miniaturist, and to make some attempts at modeling in clay. After his return to America he became widely known as a portrait painter both in oil and miniature, and found ample employment in the principal Colonial cities. During the war he served with the Colonial forces; but he by no means abandoned his work with the brush. Several of his portraits of Washington date from the war period; and during the rigorous winter at Valley Forge he not only painted the commander-in-chief but executed no less than forty miniatures of people who shared the enforced inactivity of the Revolutionary army.

Peale had a theory—derived no doubt from his own experience—that any one could learn to paint; in pursuance of which he strove to make painters of his relatives and succeeded rather well with several of them. Having taught his brother James to paint miniatures, he himself withdrew from that branch of portraiture, as he afterward withdrew from the field of portrait painting in oil with the purpose of advancing the interests of

his sons, although he continued until shortly before his death in 1827 to paint an occasional portrait. But he was not only a painter. He opened a museum of natural history and art, and in furthering this project became a taxidermist and lecturer on natural history. When the loss of his teeth impaired his speech, he turned dentist, and not only repaired his own loss but occasionally performed the same service for others—among them George Washington. The paintings in his museum consisted principally of portraits of prominent men, from his own hand or that of his son Rembrandt; and these were hung, amusingly enough, in the same room with the stuffed birds and beasts, forming a sort of frieze above the three tiers of cases. The museum, minus the flora and fauna, is now in large part preserved in Independence Hall. Though the general effect is rather monotonous and few of the canvases represent Peale's best work, it constitutes an historical record of no inconsiderable value.

At his best Peale was a good portrait painter, although if he had confined his amazing energy to his art he could no doubt have been a much better one. But his genius, as Dunlap remarked, was devoted to making money; and although this purpose fitted the spirit of the young Republic, it was not compatible with the utmost development of his artistic talents. His portraits of the Colonial period, especially of children, show a certain archaic stiffness of pose, and a struggle in attaining likeness to the sitter, due largely to his difficulty with the eyes and to insensitive simplification in modeling. His late portraits are drawn with greater facility, and one feels that they must have been very like the sitters. They are among the best portraits of the early Republican period and for this reason it is regrettable that they are not more numerous.

Courtesy of the Worcester Art Museum

EARL. William Carpenter

Courtesy of Mr. R. T. Haines Halsey

MALBONE. Joel Poinsett

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

BENBRIDGE. Elizabeth Ann Timothy

Courtesy of the New York Historical Society

RAMAGE. John Pintard

Something of the same archaic stiffness that appears in Peale's early work is in the portraits of Ralph Earl of Connecticut, even those painted after his return from his studies under West. This painter began his career before the Revolution, but his best work belongs to the years between his return from England in 1786 and the end of the century. His portraits, generally stiff, are solid and well-composed and give a pleasing sense of depth and clear light. Perhaps it is the very stiffness in the pose of his figures and his arrangement of draperies that gives one a sense of remoteness from his self-possessed gentlemen, his amiable ladies and slightly wooden children. Yet the cause seems to be deeper than this—something in the spirit of the painter and his sitters; his sense and theirs, perhaps, of their dignity and importance—born of an age when life proceeded in orderly fashion, with due regard for the proper distinction between "high people" and "low people," so that one knew precisely who one was and what one was worth in the social order.

There was no apparent doubt on this point in the minds of those elegant officers and belles of the Revolutionary period, or those personages of the "Republican Court," whom the Irishman John Ramage depicted in miniature in the New York of the Revolution and a decade after. The eighteenth-century feeling for style is in these exquisite portraits in little, exquisitely set in gold frames of the artist's own making. Ramage was by no means the only miniaturist of this period, but of those whose names have come down to us he is the best known and one of the first in ability. Although his portraits are not so well modeled, so profoundly characterized, or so beautiful in color as those of Malbone, whose short career began about the time Ramage left the country, they have all these qualities in sufficient degree to make

him one of the most delightful and interesting among American practitioners of his intimate and appealing art.

But even before Ralph Earl joined the American school in London, the Colonies had won independence of the mother country, and the spirit of the time was changing more rapidly than either the artists or their aristocratic patrons, probably, imagined. The change wrought in American life by the Revolution went far deeper, indeed, than a mere transfer of political power. Many of the Colonial aristocrats who remained loyal to King George left the country during the war, and their estates were confiscated by the State Governments. Their going left a serious gap in the ranks of "the rich and well-born" who had dominated the social order in Colonial days; while new claimants to political and social consideration were arising who, although they might qualify on the score of wealth, could hardly do so on that of breeding. Even more disquieting, probably, from the point of view of the old aristocracy, was the tenacity with which the "lower orders" who had constituted the rank and file of the Revolutionary armies clung to the egalitarian principles which had proved effective in popularizing the war. The events of the French Revolution intensified the antagonism between these orders and the remnant of the Colonial aristocracy which was bent upon keeping the reins of government firmly within its own grasp, and the lower orders safely in their places. In the end "the rich and well-born" were worsted, and the social and political power they had wielded passed into the hands of the merely rich; a change which was duly and faithfully reflected in American thought, American manners, and of course in American art.

SECTION II

MATERIAL EXPANSION; ARTISTIC CONTRACTION: 1800-1876

Painters of the Transition

The Decline of Taste

Materialism and Art

Chapter Three

Painters of the Transition

FROM the time of West's success in London until the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the history of American painting is largely the history of his pupils. Even during the Revolution the magnetic power of his reputation continued to draw American students to London. The English government appears to have behaved toward them with remarkable tolerance. John Trumbull, indeed, who had briefly served as an officer in the Revolutionary Army, managed to get himself arrested and imprisoned; but West's influence soon secured his freedom. After the war, and indeed until West died, those American students who could afford to study abroad continued to go to England, with the exception of John Vanderlyn, who studied in Paris at the suggestion of his patron, Aaron Burr. Not only did it seem the natural thing to go to London and West, but it was no doubt the most convenient course to pursue. In England, the American student would hear his own language; and in England, moreover, he would escape the turmoil into which the French Revolution had plunged the Continent. Then, too, the declining English school of painting was still regarded, in America as well as in England, as the greatest European school, especially for

portrait painting. Whether, therefore, the American student aspired to become a portrait painter or a painter of historical pictures, he went to England to study. Among the prominent American painters of the early nineteenth century, at least half had known, for periods ranging from a few months in Sully's case to years in case of such men as Trumbull and Allston, the influence of West and the English portrait painters of the eighteenth century. Gilbert Stuart, Charles B. King, William Dunlap, Samuel Waldo, Allston, Trumbull, Fulton, Morse, Henry Sargent, Rembrandt Peale—all these studied with West at one time or another, and formed their art under his influence and that of the English school.

Those who returned after the attainment of independence came with high hopes for the future of art under the new Republic. Trumbull, indeed, if one may credit his own statement, conceived such hopes while the Revolution was still in progress. "Ardently anticipating the vast consequences of the Revolution," he wrote in 1832, "and having a natural taste for drawing, . . . Colonel Trumbull resolved to cultivate his talent, with the hope of thus binding his name to the great events of his time, by becoming the graphic historiographer of them and of his early comrades." Perhaps none of his colleagues had so conscious and definite a purpose; but that they all thought an independent America would furnish abundant employment for artists there is little doubt. And why should they not have thought so? Patriotic sentiment ran high during the infancy of the Republic, save among a few disgruntled aristocrats, and to its enthusiasm all things seemed possible. The new states had come into undisputed possession of an immensely rich territory, whose resources offered apparently unlimited scope for economic development. The enthusiasts could not fore-

see that the economic development would be so prodigious that it would enfeeble and retard the growth of culture. Most of the patriots were democrats who believed that democracy actually existed in America because America had no king and no hereditary aristocracy; and like that staunch patriot and democrat William Dunlap, they believed that American democracy was a soil precisely suited for a fine flowering of the human spirit.

They were obliged to reconcile this faith as well as they could with a steady decline in quality of the collective life. The forces which dominated the Republic made for cultural aridity rather than florescence. Chief among these was the westward movement, accelerated and vulgarized by governmental sanction of speculation. The defeat of Jefferson by Hamilton during Washington's administration was really a defeat for American culture; for Jefferson represented the producing and Hamilton the speculating interest. Hamilton's victory proved that the speculating interest was strong enough to control the national government. The speculating fever drew away into the interior the wealth and energy of the coast communities, as enterprising spirits moved West in search of quick fortunes; and as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, the effect of this westward expansion began to be felt in the growing influence of the egalitarian West, with its frontier traditions—or want of them—in the national councils and on the national spirit. In the eyes of the egalitarians, the eighteenth-century culture, which was pre-eminently a culture of courts, was hopelessly discredited. Indeed, it was discredited in Europe too, and dying under the blows of successive revolutions. In its place emerged a social order which substituted the abuses of wealth for those of caste; and bourgeois manners for those of an aristocracy be-

come too decadent to be useful even in setting a standard of taste. Even such contacts, therefore, as the young Republic retained with Europe, tended to confirm the dominant tendency. For a time, the spirit of Colonial culture survived with a few statesmen such as Adams, Jefferson, Jay, and Gallatin; and in the work of a few artists whose formative years it had influenced, such as Stuart, Malbone, Allston, Vanderlyn, Morse, and Sully. But the main drift was away from it, toward a debased and vulgar opportunism in politics, toward the dull and the commonplace in art. By 1830 many of the accredited political representatives of the sovereign people at the national capital were men whose boorish minds and manners would have ensured their exclusion from the "Republican Court" of Washington's time; and long before that date American painting had so faithfully reflected the impoverishment of American life as to warrant Gilbert Stuart's conviction, in his later years, that art was on the decline.

America, therefore, did not fulfill the hopes of its artists. Nor would it have done so for some time, perhaps, even under more favorable circumstances. The states of the new Republic were provinces when the war began, with the modest cultural pretensions of provinces; and when the war was over they were all impoverished. I have already quoted Thomas Jefferson's opinion that the state of wealth in the country was not such as to foster any considerable development of the fine arts. There were others equally realistic: Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, for example, who countered his son's dithryambic on the honors and awards of Athenian artists with the terse statement that Connecticut was not Athens.

Neither Connecticut nor any other of the new Ameri-

can states. Not only were there no schools of art worth speaking of; what was infinitely more important, outside of a few private collections there were almost no works of art to be seen, and none at all of the highest quality. The American student of art had not the inestimable advantage which was the birthright of the continental European: the daily contact, in churches, squares, and public buildings, and in the museums that were opened after the French Revolution, with works of the masters from which might be derived that effortless, intuitive knowledge of past achievement on which new discoveries are based. But this is only a way of remarking that there was in America little of that sound culture which, according to Goethe, must be current in the environment if talent is to be speedily and happily developed. This was a serious condition in a country whose artists were obliged in increasing numbers to get at home what knowledge they had. American artists, be it said to their credit, were zealous in their efforts to overcome it. One of the most persistent was Charles Wilson Peale, who made two unsuccessful attempts in the late eighteenth century to found a school of art in Philadelphia, and was largely instrumental in founding the present Academy in 1805. Robert Fulton aided this worthy enterprise by placing with the new Academy for exhibition a collection of paintings by European artists. In 1810 a number of Philadelphia artists, dissatisfied with the Academy, organized "The Society of Artists of the United States" which for several years conducted a school and held exhibitions. An "American Academy of Art" was founded in New York in 1802, and chartered in 1808, but only one artist, John Trumbull, was among its members. Later it was reorganized, with more artists participating, and Colonel Trumbull as president, but it was never, apparently, either

satisfactory to artists or useful as a school of art. These early attempts to promote the study of art and educate the public taste were praiseworthy if not entirely successful; but even had they been satisfactory from every point of view they could only have mitigated somewhat the effects of the prevailing artistic poverty.

An almost incredible prudery added to the difficulties of the student. Dunlap tells of seeing a copy by Vanderlyn of Coreggio's "Antiope" at the house of a Mr. Murray who had commissioned the painter to copy a picture abroad. "Murray admired it," says Dunlap, "but he said, 'What can I do with it? I cannot hang it up in my house, and my family reprobate it.' The artist had consulted his own taste, and the advantage of studying such a work, more than the habits of his country, or the taste of his countrymen." When Vanderlyn, after his return from Europe, was exhibiting this picture and his "Ariadne" with others in two rooms of the building occupied by the American Academy, the keeper demanded their removal, saying that the parents of his pupils would not allow them to come for study to a room adjoining one in which indecent pictures were exposed. In her *Domestic Manners of the Americans,* Mrs. Trollope comments on the prurience of the American attitude toward the nude in art. At the Pennsylvania Academy she found that "a coarse-minded custom" caused men and women to be admitted in alternate groups to the gallery of casts from antique statues. An instance which she records of the way in which this spirit handicapped students is worth quoting:

> The entire absence of every means of improvement, and effectual study, is unquestionably the cause why those who manifest this devotion [to art] cannot advance farther. I heard of one young artist whose circumstances did not permit his going to

Europe, but who, being nevertheless determined that his studies should, as nearly as possible, resemble those of the European academies, was about to commence drawing the human figure, for which purpose he had provided himself with a thin silk dress in which to clothe his models, as no one of any station, he said, could be found who would submit to sit as a model without clothing.

This may not have been entirely typical. Mrs. Trollope left America in 1831; an acquaintance of William Rimmer told of entering that artist's studio in 1838 or 1839 and seeing a row of eight nude female models, from whom the painter made his choice for the picture on which he was working; and this in the very center of Puritan prejudice. But that the spirit Mrs. Trollope condemned was strong in America there is no doubt. As late as the 'sixties a commissioner sent by the French government to examine educational institutions in America, reported that this was "a country where the study of nature is not permitted to women beyond the head and extremities"; and even later than this, women models modestly concealed their features behind masks. The effect of this spirit upon the development of an art whose highest test Cellini pronounced to be the ability to draw *un bel corpo ignudo,* hardly requires comment.

Those same conditions which impeded the development of American artists prevented the growth of any general knowledge of or feeling for art; and the lack of general knowledge and interest in art of course further impeded its development. There were a few men of wealth and culture who bought pictures and in other ways tried to promote the interests of art and artists. But unfamiliarity with art rendered the general taste illiterate, and the prurience of the accepted morality rendered it vulgar. Mrs. Trollope speaks of "a most ex-

travagant passion for wax figures" among the inhabitants of Cincinnati, and remarks that "the two museums vie with each other in displaying specimens of this barbarous branch of art." One of the early employments of Hiram Powers, the sculptor, was in this "barbarous branch." He modeled for one of these Cincinnati museums a wax inferno calculated to harrow the feelings and attract the dollars of the pious.

These forerunners of Artemus Ward's "miscellanyus moral wax statoots of celebrated piruts and murderers" pandered to a taste which was not confined to the frontier towns. Both New York and Boston had their museums of waxworks. Patience Wright, mentioned by Dunlap as the first American sculptor, had such a museum in New York in the eighteenth century, and advertisements of similar exhibits are to be found in the Boston papers of the period. The Columbian Museum in Boston at the beginning of the nineteenth century had John Adams in wax, flanked by Liberty and Justice; also two figures fancifully labelled "The New York Beauty" and "The Boston Beauty." Scudder the naturalist, who had a museum of waxworks and natural history in New York, remarked to Wilson the ornithologist that "notwithstanding all, and my success so far, I still find that the Witch of Endor, and Potiphar's Wife, bring me ten dollars where my natural history does one." The Chatham Museum in Chatham Street, New York, advertised in 1828, to cite a random example, "a neat collection of curiosities," among which were wax figures, a grand Cosmorama, shells, animals, corals, etc., and a "neat gallery of paintings and engravings." In the same year, it may be worth noting, one of the chief attractions of Peale's museum of art and natural history was "the celebrated learned dog Romeo," and another was a large

transparent painting of General Jackson supported by the genius of the United States, with history "recording this memorable day in a rock for durability."

There was also some interest in panoramas and large pictures. John Vanderlyn exhibited panoramas in the Rotunda, a building constructed for the purpose on land conceded to him by the city of New York. West's large picture of "Christ Healing the Sick," a gift to the Philadelphia Hospital, was exhibited by that institution at considerable profit. His son later brought West's "Christ Rejected" to this country for exhibition. Adolph Wertmuller, a Swedish artist who had studied in Paris, exhibited a large "Danaë" of which the *Analectic Magazine* of 1815 said that it was a "splendid production . . . and for that very reason it is, on every account, to be regretted that both in the subject and the style of execution it offends alike against pure taste and the morality of the art." Dunlap and Rembrandt Peale both painted large pictures less calculated to grieve the injudicious, and traveled with them from town to town or sent them in charge of agents. According to Peale's statement, he realized the sum of $8,886 from exhibiting his "Court of Death." Henry Sargent made $3,000 from the exhibition of a large picture of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, and later sold the picture for the same amount. David's "Coronation of Napoleon," now in the Louvre, was also exhibited in this country. Such enterprises were by no means invariably successful. Dunlap often lost money on his ventures; and S. F. B. Morse exhibited at a loss a painting of the House of Representatives which had cost him eighteen months' labor. In every case, it is to be noted, the appeal of the picture to the public lay in its subject and not at all in its merit as a work of art. Even the

subject was not all-important. "Nothing but novelty," lamented Dunlap, "attracts our people."

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Such was the state of the arts in the country to which those artists returned who hoped for opportunities to paint great historical compositions under the patronage of the nation and the several states, compositions such as West had painted under the patronage of George III; such as those in which David and his school at that very time were celebrating the glory of Napoleon. Never was an ambition more inopportune. The legislatures, State and Federal, were immersed in concerns political and economic; they had little time for art, and less inclination. The most that might be expected from them was an occasional order for a portrait of some public man, or more rarely a composition depicting some historical event. The largest single commission received by any artist during the period was that awarded John Trumbull by the Federal government to fill four of the eight panels in the Rotunda of the National Capitol with scenes from American history; and because such commissions were few, the award meant keen disappointment for other artists, attended, it appears, by no lessening of the ill will that Trumbull seems frequently to have inspired in his colleagues. In a country where there were as yet no such enormous fortunes as among the European nobility, and no such interest in art, the painter could not hope for private commissions to compensate for the lack of public patronage. American historical painters, therefore, met with varying degrees of disappointment; and if the demand for portraits had not afforded some security of employment, disappointment might have turned to disaster.

Conditions being what they were, it is not surprising that many artists were attracted to pursuits less opposed to the dominant spirit of the time. Robert Fulton's case is not typical, for he had apparently divided his interest between art and science even during his student years; and he soon abandoned a promising artistic career in order to devote himself to his experiments with steamboats, submarines, and torpedoes. S. F. B. Morse, after having vainly tried to secure commissions for historical paintings, divided his energies between portrait painting and mechanical inventions, and at last gave up painting entirely in order to devote himself to the development of telegraphy. Henry Sargent, pupil of West, alternated painting with military and civil commissions. John Trumbull engaged in business for a time, and also held various appointments from the Federal government. Rembrandt Peale's occupations were not as numerous as his father's but they included pursuits wholly unconnected with painting, such as organizing a company to supply the city of Baltimore with gas. John Vanderlyn made a disastrous attempt to eke out as a showman an uncertain income as a painter. William Dunlap offers the spectacle, unusual for that time, of a painter who had early abandoned painting for other pursuits, mercantile, literary, and dramatic, taking up his brush again as a means of support when his other enterprises had failed. Dunlap, however, was never a good painter. His claim to a place in a discussion of American art rests on his invaluable *History of the Arts of Design in the United States,* in which he made available not only his personal knowledge of American artists, gathered during a long career, but as much as he could gather from other authentic sources. His book, which has been republished during the past few years with the corrections and ad-

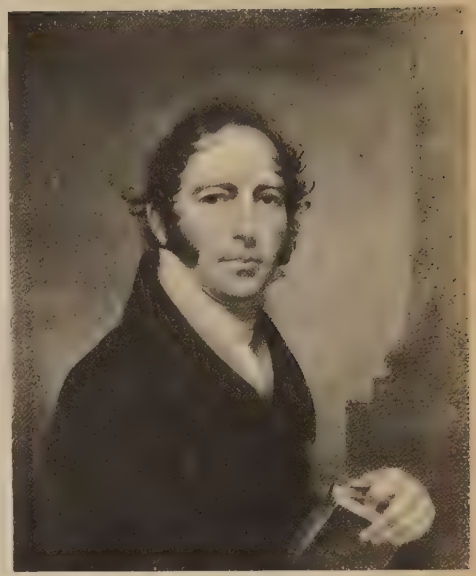
denda made possible by modern research, well repays reading, for it gives an excellent idea of the state of American culture during his lifetime. Moreover it is well written in vigorous, racy, eighteenth-century prose; for Dunlap was of the eighteenth century by birth and education, having been born in 1766.

Dunlap, knowing better than any one else his shortcomings as a painter, had no soaring ambition; and in this he was more fortunate than several of the other painters I have mentioned. Morse returned to America confidently hoping to become a painter of history. He had had great encouragement from West and Allston in London; and his "Dying Hercules" had received favorable mention from London critics. But the élite of Boston, where he opened a studio, politely admired his pictures and invited the artist to dinner. They had no commissions for him. So he reluctantly turned to portrait painting, and soon found ample employment in the South, where he went each winter for several years. Once thereafter he undertook historical painting, with the disastrous results that I have noted in the preceding section. From that time until he finally gave up painting, he appears to have painted chiefly portraits; and he did so with no little ability and proficiency. His portraits vary widely in manner and merit; but the best of them show great excellence of drawing and characterization. His backgrounds sometimes suggest the "heavy cookery" of the English school, but that is unimportant beside the fact that he was capable of painting with something of eighteenth-century distinction, and that when he retired American art lost an excellent painter at a time when his influence was badly needed.

Morse returned from his European studies in 1815. During the same year John Vanderlyn returned from

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

FULTON. Mrs. Stephen van Rensselaer



Courtesy of the Carolina Art Association. Gibbes Art Gallery, Charleston, S. C.

FRASER. Self-portrait

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

STUART. Don Josef de Jaudenes y Nebot

a long period of study and residence abroad, in the course of which he had only once returned to America for a brief stay. He came with a reputation gained in France, and brought with him several pictures, among them his "Ariadne," and "Marius on the Ruins of Carthage," to which Napoleon had awarded a gold medal. Believing, as Morse did, that great opportunities awaited the artists of his native land, he too expected that the exhibition of his pictures would bring him commissions for historical works. The next year, 1816, saw the final return to America of a painter much older than either Morse or Vanderlyn. In 1816 John Trumbull was fifty-six. He had been painter, business man, and diplomat for some thirty-two years. He had long before projected a series of paintings from American Revolutionary history, and in pursuance of this project had gone from England to France as early as 1787, where he had made miniatures in oil of Jefferson and of those French officers who had participated in the surrender at Yorktown. Returning to America in 1789, he had traveled about the country making similar studies of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and of officers in the Revolutionary Army. These miniatures, many of which are now in the Trumbull gallery at Yale, are admirable in every way, and represent this artist's best work. From these studies he had painted a series of historical compositions in miniature, which are also to be seen at the New Haven gallery.

Having arrived in America, with his pictures, Trumbull went to Washington and applied to the Congress for commissions to fill the panels for the Rotunda; and so much were the legislators impressed with the miniature studies and the two canvases of "The Battle of Bunker Hill" and "The Death of General Montgomery before

Quebec" that they awarded him commissions to fill four of the panels. His success aroused Vanderlyn's resentment, and an animosity sprang up between the two men which led to many petty words and acts. Vanderlyn felt himself to be a better painter than Trumbull; and the marked inferiority of Trumbull's pictures for the Rotunda to the studies that had won him the commissions did not lessen the younger painter's sense of wrong. Trumbull's powers as a painter had unaccountably waned, and his work for the Capitol gave little satisfaction either to connoisseurs or to the public. Probably it would have been little more successful even in the artist's best days. His "Sortie from Gibraltar," a large canvas painted in 1789, which Dunlap calls his best work, is simply an unhappy imitation of West's style. Trumbull, indeed, seems to have had little natural talent for composition and somewhat less for color; and when he attempted to paint on a large scale, these deficiencies became strikingly apparent. Although some of his portraits in oil have merit, his chief claim to distinction as a painter rests on the excellent miniatures of his early years.

Vanderlyn, at the time that Trumbull received the commissions for the panels of the Rotunda, was forty years old and at the height of his powers. He had been well grounded in the accurate drawing and firm modeling taught by David and his school, and was capable of painting better portraits than any other American painter of his time, if one except Stuart at his best. Yet with the qualities which made the French school superior to the English, he had acquired also the contempt of French painters of that day for portraiture. The ambition fostered by David and his school was to paint great compositions based on history or classical literature. Even so great a portrait painter as Ingres was half ashamed

to paint portraits. Since Vanderlyn shared this low estimate of portraiture, he naturally felt that his career as a painter was ruined by his inability to secure commissions for historical works. It was not until 1842 that his friends at last secured for him a commission to fill one of the remaining panels of the Rotunda; and his friend Bishop Kip told of visiting him in Paris in 1844, where the picture "was advancing under the hand of a clever French artist whom Vanderlyn had employed." It was too late; the artist's power had so weakened that he no longer had sufficient skill to carry out his own design.

Rarely have the legitimate hopes of an artist met with more complete frustration. His ability as a portrait painter did not compensate financially for his failure to get commissions for historical works, for he was a tedious worker and his sitters therefore were few. The business enterprise with which he tried to augment his slender earnings from his brush failed at last after a series of vexatious difficulties which he suspected Trumbull of having instigated, just when he had almost discharged the debt incurred for the construction of the building, and might look forward to making a profit. To add to his bitterness, a vulgar taste assailed his paintings as indecent. There is tragedy in the letter he wrote after the death of Allston:

> When I look back, some five or six and thirty years since, when we were both in Rome together, and next-door neighbors on the Trinità del Monte, and in the spring of life, full of enthusiasm for our art, and fancying fair prospects awaiting us in after years, it is painful to reflect how far these hopes have been from being realized.

Yet it is doubtful whether Vanderlyn would have succeeded much better than Trumbull with the kind of painting he aspired to do. One cannot judge him by

the "Landing of Columbus," in the Rotunda, for he did not paint it. But his "Ariadne," which shocked laymen and won extravagant encomiums from artists, is a surprisingly bad picture for an artist who could paint the portraits in the Metropolitan Museum and the New York City Hall; and his famous "Marius" is not much better, to judge by the engraved reproduction. Nor is his "Death of Jane McCrea" more pleasing. They are all school pictures, competent and uninspired. One cannot know, of course, what opportunity and the warm, intelligent appreciation which America was incapable of giving its artists might have done to enlarge the powers that were slowly destroyed by indifference and neglect. As it is, Vanderlyn's claim to distinction rests, like Trumbull's, on his production in a branch of art that he considered unimportant. His life, like Trumbull's, was embittered by the failure of his hopes. Indeed he had much more cause for bitterness than Trumbull, for the latter, although his opportunities fell far short of his soaring ambition, was much more successful than Vanderlyn, and his disappointment had not the added sting of poverty. Trumbull was naturally of an irritable, suspicious, cantankerous disposition; and these qualities were aggravated by his disappointment. With young artists, he was likely to be "cold and discouraging respecting the arts," as young Frazee found him. He told the eager young stonecutter that no sculpture "would be wanted in this country for yet a hundred years," and left him marveling that such a man should be considered a fit president for an academy of art. Vanderlyn was sensitive and introspective, and if his failure did not make him cold and discouraging, it did make him bitter. The careers of these two men are typical of the discouragement that awaited the painter who aspired to work on a scale which

TRUMBULL. The Battle of Bunker's Hill

Courtesy of the Yale Gallery of Fine Arts

Courtesy of Mrs. Edward W. Haines

VANDERLYN. Sampson V. S. Wilder

the state of American wealth, and more especially of American culture, did not warrant.

Although Washington Allston was spared the bitterness of Vanderlyn and Trumbull, he by no means escaped the effect of the blighting east wind of indifference that swept the field of art in his day. This painter, poet, and friend of Coleridge returned to America in 1818 with a well-established English reputation. If the adulation of the choice spirits who sought him out in his retirement at Cambridge kept him from knowing Vanderlyn's bitter loneliness or Trumbull's disappointment, it did not keep him from the slow paralysis of inertia. After his return to America, indeed, his remarkable prestige as a painter was maintained more by his early works and the charm of his conversation than by his painting. There was nothing to feed the spirit of the painter—neither pictures to see nor any demand for the colossal canvases that he projected. Thus, although his career was not tragic, it was not productive. His *magnum opus,* "Belshazzar's Feast," begun before he left London, Washington Irving found still unfinished twelve years later when he visited Allston's studio in Cambridge. It never was finished. It hangs, incomplete and discolored, in the Boston Museum; and its condition, one must admit, inspires no deep regret.

Allston shared, with West's other pupils, their master's view of the importance of subject—the idea that the story of a painting should edify the beholder through an appeal to religious or patriotic or moral sentiment. Today we know that nobility in art is a quality not of the subject but of the artist; and that a still-life may have as much nobility as a Holy Family. Allston himself was very near discovering this in Italy, where "Titian, Tintoret, and Paul Veronese absolutely enchanted me, for they took

away all sense of subject. . . . It was the poetry of colour which I felt; procreative in its nature, giving birth to a thousand things which the eyes did not see, and distinct from their cause. But I now understand it, and I *think* I understand *why* so many great colourists, especially Tintoret and Paul Veronese, gave so little heed to the ostensible *stories* of their compositions. . . . They addressed themselves not to the senses merely, as some have supposed, but rather through them to that region . . . of the imagination which is supposed to be under the exclusive dominion of music." But Allston was too much imbued with the idea of art then current to achieve this lyric indifference to subject; and could he have done so, he would have been unable to make himself understood. Dunlap's comment on the quotation just given is eloquent of the tenacity with which the old notions held: ". . . It certainly is not fair to leave the spectator to make out the story of a picture, and to be puzzled by finding Pope Gregory alongside of Saint Peter, and both dressed in costume as far from truth as they were from similarity of opinion. All the charm of colour may be attained without sacrificing truth." It needed the revolutionary movements among French painters of the nineteenth century to enforce a reluctant acceptance of the fact that painting is neither literature nor history, nor yet moral precept, save only incidentally.

§

The transition from Colonial provincialism to Republican isolation is nowhere more evident than in the portrait painting of the early Republic. For a few years after the Revolution the spirit of eighteenth-century painting survived, with such painters as Benbridge, Charles Wilson Peale, Ralph Earl, and Edward Savage, engraver and

painter in miniature and oil, whose group portrait of the Washington family, now in the Boston Museum, is one of the famous pictures of the time. The tradition was also continued by those foreign painters who arrived toward the close of the century, perhaps in the expectation of sharing in the chimerical artistic renaissance—such men as the respectable English portrait painter Robert Edge Pine, the Englishman James Sharpless, who left behind him many pastel profiles, "very like," according to Dunlap, the French engraver St. Memin, the Swedish artist Adolph Wertmuller, who had studied his art in Paris, the English miniaturists Robert Field and Alexander Robertson, the English painter and etcher Archibald Robertson, and the Irish miniaturist Walter Robertson. About the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, a change began to be evident, notable in a loss of distinction, as that in the social life was notable in the supersession of eighteenth-century manners, with their hint of European courts, by the rather blatant egalitarianism of the frontier.

During the first quarter of the century the spirit of the old order and that of the new coexisted, with the latter gradually gaining ground. Sometimes the conflict is evident in different works of the same painter—Jarvis, for example, who was capable now of recapturing something of eighteenth-century style, and again of painting with mere pedestrian competence; or Neagle, whose portraits are of singularly unequal interest. One painter of the period, however, who never fell short of distinction, was Edward Greene Malbone, of whom his friend Allston said that "he had the happy talent . . . of elevating the character without impairing the likeness: this was remarkable in his male heads; and no woman ever lost any beauty from his hand." Malbone, like Jarvis,

was self-taught, and began his brief career in Rhode Island at about the same time that Jarvis was inspired to outdo the wretched performances of "the best portrait painter in New York." There is no hint of vulgarity or dullness in the work of this admirable painter. His portraits, beautifully drawn and modeled, clear and brilliant in color, reveal the distinction of his mind, as those of Jarvis too often betray the streak of vulgarity that marred his picturesque and brilliant personality.

The ablest exponent of the eighteenth-century tradition, and the most famous American portrait painter from his return to America in 1793 until his death in 1828, was the gifted, witty, and irascible Gilbert Stuart. This artist was born in Rhode Island in 1754, went to England to study at an early age, gained an excellent reputation there, and lived with an irresponsible lavishness that brought him into financial difficulties, from which he took "French leave" by going to Ireland. Dunlap hints that his return to his native land may have been prompted by similar difficulties in Ireland; but his avowed purpose was to make a portrait of Washington. And indeed it may well have been his only purpose, for the honor of painting the great national hero was dearly coveted by portrait painters—the profit too, for his portrait was in great demand. That Washington met the incessant demand for sittings with humorous resignation would appear from a letter with which he answered, in 1785, a request from Francis Hopkinson that he sit to Robert Edge Pine.

Dear Sir: "In for a penny in for a pound" is an old adage. I am so hacknied to the touches of the painter's pencil, that I am now altogether at their beck, and sit like Patience on a monument, whilst they delineate the features of my face. It is a proof, among

many others, of what habit and custom may effect. At first I was impatient at the request, and as restive under the operation as a colt is of the saddle. The next time I submitted very reluctantly, but with fewer flounces: now, no dray moves more readily to the drill, than I to the painter's chair. It may easily be conceived, therefore, that I yielded a ready acquiescence to your request and to the views of Mr. Pine. . . .

He appears also to have yielded a ready acquiescence to Stuart's request for sittings. But the brilliant painter, who had been unsubdued even in the presence of the great Dr. Johnson, and whose remarkable conversational powers had always enabled him to divert his sitters and keep them animated, found himself, it is said, quite dumb with awe before the Father of his country. The painting reflected the constraint of painter and sitter, and Stuart afterward said he had destroyed it. If he did, he copied it first, for it exists in the so-called Gibbs-Channing portrait and several others copied either from this portrait or the original. His second attempt was the so-called "Athenæum head," now in the Boston Museum, which soon took precedence in popular favor over all other portraits of Washington. He also painted a full-length portrait for Lord Lansdowne, which was badly engraved by Heath of London without the painter's authorization and to his great indignation. Stuart himself made several copies of the Lansdowne portrait, and other painters copied his copies. They likewise pirated his copies of the Athenæum head. It was inevitable; the demand was so great and the theft so easy. But the fact did not lessen the righteous anger of the painter who saw the work of inferior men palmed off on the public as his own.

Meanwhile Stuart found plenty of other commissions to occupy him, in Philadelphia, Washington, and Boston,

in which city he finally settled. The distinguished and the merely wealthy sought the honor of being immortalized by his brush (I paraphrase Dunlap), and so rapidly did he work that he was able to turn out an astonishing number of canvases—so many indeed that his work preponderates in most collections of early American paintings. Young artists naturally sought his advice and instruction, and he appears to have been generous in his treatment of them. Sully, Neagle, Jouett, Frothingham, and others profited by his knowledge and experience, and his influence is discernible in their work. One quality, however, sharply differentiates Stuart from most of the contemporaries of his American period: the quality of style. His merits, as well as his defects, were of the eighteenth century. Neither the man nor his work was at home in the America of the early nineteenth. Confronted with the undistinguished portraiture of most of his colleagues, he naturally concluded that art was on the decline; and his discouragement was reflected in his remark to young Frothingham, that one had better be a tea-waterman's horse in New York than a portrait painter anywhere.

Within its limits, his own art has great merit. He rarely attempted anything beyond the head and shoulders, and these are not always well placed on the canvas. The poses of the sitters, and the accessories of costumes and draperies, are all so nearly alike in the handling that one gets an effect of monotony from any considerable collection of his works. He was never entirely comfortable in painting three-quarter lengths and full lengths, although he could do so quite successfully when he tried, and he is not known to have painted any group portraits or to have undertaken anything other than portraiture. He studied under West, but his style is quite

unlike that of his teacher. Indeed, his own reminiscences, and Dunlap's, of his student days reveal how little influence West had upon him. "Pretty well, pretty well," he answered, when asked for his opinion of a picture Trumbull was painting, "but more like our master's flesh than nature's. When Benny teaches the boys, he says, 'Yellow and white there,' and he makes a streak, 'red and white there,' another streak, . . . but nature does not colour in streaks. Look at my hand; see how the colours are mottled and mingled, yet all is clear as silver." Stuart's color is much more nearly related to that of his colleagues, the English portrait painters, with whom he compares well. He had great natural ability, and a healthy independence of all accepted formulæ in art; he preferred to be guided by his own vision rather than to impose upon his own eyes the vision of others. It is not surprising, therefore, that he opposed academies, saying that they raised up a multitude of mediocre artists. His own style seems to have been developed independently, although it naturally shares in the characteristics of the school of painters with whom he was associated. If its faults are those of the school—if the forms are sometimes "soft and spongy"—so are its merits. His best work —and his power never declined, as did that of Trumbull and Vanderlyn—shows an accurate eye for character, fine breadth of handling, and a color whose richness is undimmed by the passing of time.

Stuart was of the eighteenth century both by the time of his birth and by reason of his training and experience. Thomas Sully, born in 1783, was in the eighteenth-century tradition chiefly by virtue of the influences which formed his art. He had his first lessons in oil painting from Henry Benbridge, and later profited by Stuart's advice before going to London for a brief period during

which he sought instruction from West. From his portraits—and they are many, for his career was long—one gets the impression either that he painted only aristocrats or that he saw the aristocrat in every one. His work is not always interesting; indeed many of his portraits, especially of women, are thin and insipid; but his sitters, if they had not the virtue of good breeding, have been enabled to assume it before posterity by the help of the painter. Leslie complained that his pictures sometimes looked as if one could blow them away; and the stricture applies to many of these "pretty" portraits. But that he was capable of sound draughtsmanship and truthful characterization is evident in such pictures as the portrait of Dr. Samuel Coates, or that of Mr. Chamberlain, here reproduced. He was an indefatigable worker and student of art, and during his long life, in the periods when sitters were few, he painted a large number of so-called "fancy pictures," most of which share abundantly in that quality of insipidity that characterizes his less successful portraits. He also tried his hand at least once at historical painting. His "Washington Crossing the Delaware," ordered by the Legislature of North Carolina but rejected because of its size, now hangs in the Boston Museum along with such other large canvases as Allston's "Uriel in the Sun," West's "King Lear," and Trumbull's "Sortie from Gibraltar"; honest works all, but uninteresting now to any save the historian of American art and American taste.

§

I have remarked that the demand for portraits saved the early American painters from complete disaster. The portrait painter, by moving from place to place in search of work, might hope to make a living, however precari-

Courtesy of Mr. Herbert Lee Pratt

SULLY. Mr. Chamberlain

MORSE. Mrs. David C. De Forest

Courtesy of the Yale Gallery of Fine Arts

ous. Those who devoted themselves exclusively to this branch of art fared on the whole much better than their more ambitious colleagues. In the early nineteenth century, each center of population of course had its portrait painters who were especially identified with it—Stuart, and later Frothingham, Harding, and Alexander in Boston; Sully, Neagle, Trott the miniaturist, in Philadelphia; Jarvis, Inman, Cummings the miniaturist, and Waldo and Jewitt in New York. Even Lexington, Kentucky, had its resident artist in Matthew Jouett, known for years as "the best painter west of the mountains," who made occasional expeditions to New Orleans and Atlanta in quest of employment. Charleston, South Carolina, had Charles Fraser, an excellent miniaturist, friend and pupil of Malbone, who was himself too much of an itinerant to be identified with any one place. Rembrandt Peale settled in Baltimore, where besides painting portraits he conducted a museum and engaged in various other business enterprises. In Washington, Charles B. King for forty years painted portraits of politicians and hangers-on of the Federal government. This is by no means offered as a complete catalogue of portrait painters resident in American cities in the first thirty years of the nineteenth century, but rather as evidence that there was a sufficient demand for portraits to enable a respectable number of painters in the centers of population to reach a fair degree of proficiency.

Many causes contributed to the rise of a native school of painters: the severing of the political ties with the mother country; the decline of the English school and the death of West; the generally unsettled conditions in Europe during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era; and perhaps also the unsettled political and economic conditions at home following the War for Independence,

and later that of 1812. Whatever the reasons may have been, the fact is that an increasing number of painters got at home what knowledge they had, and as their number increased, the direct European influence correspondingly declined. Their work, from Jarvis's full-length canvases of heroes of 1812 to Ingham's sugary, wax-like portraits which were popular with the ladies of the period, is pretty generally undistinguished and dull. There is charm in some of their miniatures: Trott at his best did some excellent work; Fraser's portraits are pleasing in color and accurate in drawing; and Jarvis, who got from Malbone his instruction in this branch of art, produced some miniatures which show that Malbone's influence was not lost upon him. The Peales, James and Raphael, who studied their art with Charles Wilson, brother of the one and father of the other, also produced good portraits in little. Among native-trained painters in oils there is still a faint English influence. It is stronger, naturally, among those painters who got direct instruction from artists who had studied abroad than among those who derived their knowledge from practice and from such pictures as they could get access to. The painters Neagle, Frothingham, Jouett, who came under the influence of Stuart, show something of his breadth of handling. Neagle, especially, was capable at his best of eighteenth-century breadth and distinction, although his later pictures reveal a marked diminution of these qualities. His portrait of Lydia Kelley, praised by Stuart, is remarkable for a freshness and originality of design unusual in a period when portraits, like houses, all followed pretty closely the same conventional pattern. Among others of the native school, the tendency was to lose the conception of the whole in an indiscriminate and monotonous stressing of detail. This is to say, of

course, that the painters showed no instinct for composition; indeed Mrs. Trollope wrote that during her sojourn in America she never heard the word mentioned in connection with painting. And as their pictures were undistinguished in composition, they were also, for the most part, sadly deficient in color. But how should they be otherwise, when of the few pictures that were accessible to the student of art the majority were either indifferent copies from the old masters, or minor works of precisely that European school which was weakest in its grasp of the essentials of painting?

One of the striking facts about the period under discussion is the frequent loss of a painter's early years, generally because his environment offered little in the way of opportunity or encouragement. The American artist who discovered his vocation after the age of twenty was not at all exceptional; and the one who discovered it earlier was often dissuaded from it at first by relatives or friends. When one remembers that Delacroix was famous at twenty, one realizes the significance of Goethe's dictum concerning the need of sound culture for the speedy development of talent. The outlying American communities had no other pictures than the daubs of the occasional itinerant portrait painter, and no other artists than those same itinerants, whose works, wretched though they were, often served to open the eyes of a gifted youth and reveal to him his own ability, hitherto unsuspected. James Frothingham, indeed, had never even seen a picture before he undertook to represent the human face, first in black and white, and later in color. Never having seen a palette either, he invented one, which consisted of a thin board in which he had cut out as many holes as he had colors, and fitted in thimbles to hold the paint. Dunlap remarks on the strangeness

of this complete ignorance of art in a community near Boston, and lays it to the father's social position (he was a chaise-maker). A sign painter of Boston urged the young painter to seek Stuart's advice. After some hesitation he did so, and met with the pessimistic opinion already quoted. Frothingham, younger and more hopeful than Stuart by many years, did not allow himself to be discouraged. He continued to paint and to carry his work to Stuart, and finally had the satisfaction of hearing the old painter say, "Except for myself, there is no man in the United States can paint a better head than that."

Francis Alexander, son of a Connecticut farmer, made his first attempt at painting when he was twenty years old; and having succeeded in representing some fish to the admiration of his relatives and neighbors, decided to become an ornamental sign painter. "My reading," he wrote to Dunlap, "had been so limited, and my birth so obscure, that I thought sign-painting the highest branch of painting in the world." He managed to get to New York, where he discovered that there were higher branches, and after studying there as long as slender means permitted, returned home and commenced portrait painting. This led him to Providence, Rhode Island, and later, at Stuart's suggestion, to Boston. From this modest beginning he rose to an enviable position among the portrait painters of his day.

Another characteristic beginning was that of Chester Harding, who became famous both in America and England toward the end of the period. This artist was first a chair-maker, then a tavern keeper, next a sign painter, and finally, in 1817, at the age of twenty-five, started painting portraits. In his own story of his life, "My Egistography," he tells with engaging humor of his early

Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

NEAGLE. Pat Lyon

Roman Revival — JEFFERSON — Monticello

struggles. He was a sign painter in Pittsburgh when he got his first inspiration from the pictures of one Nelson, a painter of ornamental signs and of portraits "as bad as could well be produced in any new country." This person would give no instruction free of charge, and Harding could not afford to pay for it. He engaged the painter to portray himself and his wife at ten dollars each, thinking to learn from watching him at work; but this was not permitted, so he resorted to the method of observation and experiment. After close examination of the two heads he attempted to paint a portrait of his wife, and great was his delight when an actual likeness began to emerge. Moving to Paris, Kentucky, he dared to set up as a portrait painter, and thus, inauspiciously enough, he began a profession in which he became famous as much perhaps through the charm of his personality and (as he said) the public curiosity aroused by his being a self-taught backwoodsman, as through his painting, which, although it compares well enough with that of most of his contemporaries, shares their characteristic defects. Two further incidents in connection with his early career throw an interesting light on life in the early Republic. One is his pilgrimage to the frontier cabin of the aged Daniel Boone. The famous pioneer and his numerous descendants were awe-struck at Harding's portrait of him, for it was the first picture they had ever seen. The other incident occurred after his return to his old home in western New York. His grandfather, taking him aside one day, told him it was "little better than swindling to charge forty dollars for one of those effigies," and that he wanted him to settle down and become an honest farmer.

Fortunately for the development of native art, there were not only people who were ready to pay forty dol-

lars or more for effigies; there were even those who would buy an occasional historical picture; and there were a good many (considering the state of the general taste) who would purchase the genre paintings and landscapes of the native painters, pictures whose chief claim to interest was that they represented scenes with which the beholder was familiar—the incidents of his daily life and the landscape of his native country. There had been more or less of this kind of painting from the time when the Colonies had painters of any ability; but having no such sentimental interest as portraits, the pictures were much less likely to be preserved. There is little cause to regret their disappearance, or that of the "fancy pictures," and landscapes of the period under discussion. Not that these are all lost, however. I have mentioned those of Sully. Some of Inman's landscapes and figure pictures are still to be seen. One occasionally also encounters the sentimental Shakespearean scenes of the Flaggs, George W. and Jared B., or the marine pictures of Thomas Birch which were popular at the time both in their original form and in the engravings which made them available to the general public. Some of John Lewis Krimmel's miniature-like early Republican scenes are extant: pictures of the crowds in Philadelphia on election day or the Fourth of July, or of such humorous subjects as that of the young lady who has returned from boarding school too refined for her own comfort or that of her bewildered relatives. The landscapes of Thomas Doughty are also to be seen still, both in originals and engravings; landscapes almost monochromatic and showing no slightest conception of the meaning of composition. The genre pictures of W. S. Mount are to be met with in various collections; likewise monochromatic, and none too well composed, but showing a vital and humor-

ous zest for the familiar scenes of rural life that links him, in intention if not in performance, with the Dutch genre painters.

§

To sum up the artistic tendencies of the early Republic, one may say that they were analogous to its political and economic development, as they were largely, of course, conditioned by that development. If the "rich and well-born" had won a real rather than a Pyrrhic victory under Hamilton's leadership, the artists who returned to their native shores with ambition fired by the example of West in England or David in France, might have found more encouragement than they did. But the political opportunism of the new national government, and its preoccupation with the three-cornered struggle among the Southern planters, the egalitarian Western freeholders, and the Northern merchants and manufacturers, left it little interest in the promotion of the arts. The historical painters, therefore, denied any extensive patronage by the State, and without hope of any from a predominantly puritan Church, had only one resource left: the patronage of the rich. But in that day American fortunes were neither princely nor so numerous as a century later; there was no very large market for "ten-acre canvases." Nor was there sufficient culture to ensure any general interest in a school of painting which depended largely for popularity upon a knowledge of literature and history. It was a bit remote from the interests of plain Americans; they preferred the near and familiar: a prospect of New York from Hoboken; the fight of the *Constitution* and the *Guerrière;* a recognizable bit of landscape with grazing animals. But, above all, they wanted portraits—engraved portraits of the national

heroes if they could not afford paintings, or portraits in oil or miniature of relatives and friends. The painters of the period soon lost whatever illusions they may have had about themselves or their public. Realizing that they were pioneers in a pioneer country, they were content to make the most of the resources at their disposal, and to leave boasting about their art to such laymen as the one Mrs. Trollope amusingly quotes, who considered American opinion ample authority for the contention that Harding was the greatest living painter. The artists themselves knew that they were working for those who would follow after them; that, as Inman said, "The business of a few generations of painters, in this country as in all others, is to prepare the way for their successors."

Chapter Four

The Decline of Taste

FOR a time the new independence and the old deference to English usage divided the field of architecture in the centers of population. In the rural sections, churches and houses were long built as they had been built in the Colonial period. Many an early nineteenth-century house in rural New England has the oak frame and great central chimney of the seventeenth century; many a church has the steeple and portico borrowed in Colonial days from the London churches of Wren and Gibbs. In the design and furnishings of mansions and public buildings, the Adam mode gained ascendency immediately after the war. This mode, derived by Robert Adam from his study of the excavations at Pompeii, had become fashionable in England just before the Revolution, and had been reflected in the decorative detail of a few late Colonial houses. As soon as the war was over, Adam designs, Adam furniture, Adam composition ornaments, were introduced into America, and gained such a widespread vogue that the style has been mistakenly regarded as typical of the Colonial period.

This, the last phase of the English Georgian mode, was marked by lightness of proportion and delicate refinement of detail. Its distinguishing features in archi-

tecture are slender columns and light cornices, delicate ornamental motifs—wreaths, festoons, pateræ—and, in the plan of the interior, the contrasting of rooms in various sizes and shapes, square, round, oval, or octagonal. In the furniture, which supplanted the Chippendale mode, there was the same tendency toward lighter forms and restrained decoration. Straight, slender legs, square or round, plain or reeded, took the place of the Chippendale cabriole leg with its carved knee and ball and claw foot. Carving was delicate and sparingly used, its place being taken by inlays of contrasting woods. Tambour fronts and tops appeared on desks and cabinets; the fronts of sideboards swelled in graceful curves and were elaborately inlaid; knife boxes were shaped like classic urns; secretaries and bookcases were topped with urn-shaped finials. Mirrors were flanked by delicate pilasters and surmounted by the chaste "compo" wreaths and festoons of the Adam mode. Pilasters, festoons, and urn-shaped finials ornamented the cases of the ubiquitous grandfather clocks.

Among architects, Charles Bulfinch, the first American professional, was the chief exponent of the mode, although he also worked in the Roman style and in that of the later Greek revival. In Franklin Crescent, in Boston, he made a financially disastrous attempt to follow the example set by the brothers Adam in the Adelphi. Little of his domestic work remains, but a few old houses on Beacon Hill bear, in their light, well-proportioned porticoes and delicately leaded fan-lights, the mark of his refined taste. In Salem, his disciple the wood-carver and carpenter-architect, Samuel McIntire, built for the wealthy merchants and shipbuilders of that thriving seaport a number of houses which the subsequent decline

in the fortunes of the city saved from the demolition that has overtaken many historic buildings which stood in the path of commercial development in other cities. Salem is indeed a sort of museum of Colonial and early Republican architecture, for in addition to McIntire's masterpieces, it possesses the famous House of the Seven Gables, the John Ward house, and several other excellent examples of American mediæval architecture—monuments of early American civilization that are duly appreciated and carefully preserved. The houses of McIntire, large and cubical with low-pitched balustraded roofs, are not beautiful in design or especially convenient in plan. But except for William Rush he was the most skilled wood-carver of his time; and the beauty of his houses is in the refined proportions and perfect workmanship of his elaborate entrances with their slender columns, and the friezes, mantels, and door casings of the interiors. To the stock motifs of the Adam ornamentation, he added the American eagle and baskets of fruit in low relief. He also devised square fence-posts ornamented with delicate pilasters, and surmounted by urns.

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In this period appeared the first professional architects in America: the Frenchmen Stephen Hallet, Joseph Mangin, and Pierre Charles L'Enfant; the Irishman James Hoban; the Englishman Benjamin Henry Latrobe; the Americans Charles Bulfinch and John McComb. The amateurs, however, were not driven from the field. William Thornton's design for the National Capitol was preferred over that of Hallet, and Thomas Jefferson's observation of the letter of the Palladian law brought about the attempt to adapt not only classical elements but

the actual forms of Roman buildings to the uses of American citizens and public bodies.

It was a period which proved the wisdom of Jefferson's practical observation concerning the relative value for Americans of architecture and the arts of painting and sculpture. The young states were poor; nevertheless they must have public buildings. The Federal government, moreover, must be fittingly housed. Jefferson himself furnished the plan for the Virginia State Capitol, an enlarged version of the Maison Carrée at Nîmes, with, of course, the changes required to adapt the building to the uses of the state government—the division of the interior into assembly and court rooms, the piercing of the walls with windows. Major L'Enfant laid out the national capital on a grandiose radial plan, afterward ignored, and readopted late in the nineteenth century. In New York City, Joseph Mangin designed and John McComb built the City Hall, after a plan adapted from the French version of the Roman mode, with hollow front, arched windows, slender columns and pilasters, and graceful cupola. Charles Bulfinch's State House in Boston, with its arched and colonnaded portico and well-proportioned dome, was the masterpiece of this architect who left his imprint upon the New England architecture of the period. The White House, with its chastely classical façade and colossal portico, was the work of James Hoban, and so likewise was the Capitol of South Carolina, for which L'Enfant's Federal Hall in New York served as model.

These buildings and the mansions of the time show more careful design with a view to classical correctness than those in the Georgian vernacular—the imprint of the professional architect, with his better knowledge of classical modes. They also show less of originality and

more of borrowing. In the Roman mode of post-Colonial architecture the desideratum was not an original solution of a problem but a classically correct solution. Plagiarism became the accepted thing, and the architect was admired quite as much for the ingenuity with which he adapted borrowed forms as for any originality he might display in his combination of the rigidly imposed classical elements. Jefferson's adaptation of the Maison Carrée marked the beginning of this reproductive architecture. Bulfinch "lifted" for the Boston State House the arched and colonnaded portico of the Garde-meuble in the Place de la Concorde; Jefferson, in the central unit of the University of Virginia, and Ramée in that of Union College at Schenectady, borrowed the circular form of the Roman Pantheon. The Pantheon also inspired Latrobe's design for the Catholic cathedral in Baltimore. Roman pavilions of red brick joined by white colonnades flanked the pantheon-like library of the University of Virginia. European buildings and the designs of European architects were studied with a view to their adaptability to American uses. In the Roman style, the French influence superseded that of England—a development due to Thomas Jefferson's careful study of French architecture while Ambassador to Paris, to American sympathy with the French Revolution, and to the work of French architects on American mansions and public buildings.

It is a curious contradiction that appears before us in the character of Thomas Jefferson, chief republican apostle of individualism, and chief exponent of Palladian dogmatism in architecture. That the new Republic, in art and architecture, should have leaned heavily upon Europe is not surprising; it could hardly be expected to emerge at once from the cultural dependence which

had characterized Colonial society. But that Thomas Jefferson, of all people, should have thought to find, in the classical academism of Palladio, the fitting expression of the spirit of his country is really a bit remarkable. Mr. Fiske Kimball explains his insistence upon classical correctness as the result of his love of logical order and his natural disposition to go to sources. This is very well; one can understand that if architecture was to be classic, so scholarly a man would wish it to be classic according to the laws of classical usage. But it does not explain his unquestioning acceptance of the classical formula. It is strange to find the author of the Declaration, the Virginia statutes abolishing entail and primogeniture, and that guaranteeing religious freedom, writing to Major L'Enfant that "When it is proposed to prepare plans for the Capitol I should prefer the adoption of some one of the models of antiquity which have had the approbation of thousands of years." But Jefferson's ideas about economic, religious, and political freedom were in the spirit of his time, although sometimes far ahead of its practice. To challenge the accepted canons of architecture in the name of freedom would have been to oppose himself to his time. These were not vexed questions. There seems to have been no doubt in the minds of architects and laymen (in spite of various bulgings and crackings) that the classical mould was admirably well suited to the spirit of the modern world. Probably Jefferson accepted classicism simply because it never occurred to him to question it.

No doubt his insistence upon strictly classical forms was one expression of his republicanism. Like many of his contemporaries, he saw in the art of the ancient republics the fitting symbol of modern republicanism. But the architecture he sponsored was not Republican;

it was Roman of the Empire whose architecture consisted of forms borrowed from Greece and Asia, combined and enormously inflated. It was the best he could do, however, from Palladio and his own study of the ancient ruins of France. His chief ambition, it would seem, was to form the taste of his countrymen by making them familiar with "chaste models" of classic architecture.

This laudable ambition was not to be easily realized; indeed it was not to be realized at all. Although Jefferson's buildings at the University of Virginia have dignity, it is hardly a Roman dignity. For all his care to represent in the buildings the best example of the three classic orders, the charm of these pseudo-Roman pavilions is not in their purity of classical form and detail, but in the severe harmony of their grouping and in the effect of the materials which circumstances forced upon him. The contrast of red brick walls and white colonnades, under the green of the fine old trees, works—with the spell of the architect's personality—a magic that makes the group seem finer than it is. It is the despised material, chiefly —the red brick and painted white pine of the Colonial architecture—that saves them by supplying a warmth of color without which they might seem heavy and dreary. In these buildings, and in his adaptation of the Maison Carrée, Jefferson proved, all unconsciously, the futility of pouring new wine into old bottles.

But he did not prove it to his own time. The Virginia Capitol and the University stirred the admiration of architects, and aroused them to efforts at similar adaptations. In the architecture of houses and public buildings, for a time the Sage of Monticello wielded a powerful influence. Fortunately, however, the actual reproduction of classic buildings could not be carried very far. Ameri-

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can uses had to be considered, and the rigid forms of temple-architecture were not flexible enough to be easily adapted. In spite of Jefferson's influence, therefore, many a building of the early Republic is chiefly admirable because the architect has had some opportunity—although little enough at best—to exercise originality in the application of the academic formula.

In the North, the influence of Bulfinch and his followers imposed the slender pillars, light cornices, and carved or "compo" ornament of the Adam mode. In the South, although fine Adam houses appeared here and there—the Nathaniel Russell house at Charleston, Thornton's Homewood in Maryland and his Tudor Place in Georgetown—the heavy proportions and colossal portico of the temple style were in general favor. On the plantations, offices and outhouses took the form of pavilions grouped with Palladian symmetry around the Great House and sometimes connected with it by colonnaded passages, as at Monticello. After his resignation as Washington's Secretary of State, Jefferson set about making Monticello more Roman, by pulling down the attics to make a one-story effect, and adding a dome over the octagonal salon, as in the Hôtel de Salm which was one of his favorite French adaptations of the Roman style. All over the South, great houses arose having elliptical or octagonal bays, after the French fashion, and heavy, white-columned porticoes. Inside, the space was disposed with a view to greater privacy and comfort. The main stairway was sometimes placed in a lateral hall. Back stairs were introduced, to conceal from visitors the activities of servants. In the fine town houses the reception rooms were placed in the story above the street floor. Rooms were very large, with high ceilings—eighteen feet in the salon at Monticello. The myth of Roman

republicanism was sustained by sacrificing the charm of intimacy. Attempting to furnish one of these Roman mansions, or one of the early Greek revival—the great drawing-rooms at Arlington, for example—must have been like trying to give a homelike air to a public building.

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The delicate forms of the Sheraton and Hepplewhite furniture, based on the Adam mode, were not very well suited to this Republican spaciousness. Nor were the chaste Egyptian curves of the Directoire style. The heavy Empire style, with its massive sideboards and wardrobes, was better fitted, one fancies, to these great rooms. The Sheraton and Hepplewhite furniture, of course, was really best suited to the Adam houses; and for these houses American cabinetmakers produced excellent pieces copied or adapted from the English designs. Foremost among cabinetmakers of the period was Duncan Phyfe of New York, whose long career spanned the first half of the nineteenth century and divides it into three periods which faithfully reflect the decline of Republican taste: the Adam period; the Empire period; the period (1830-1847) of what he bitterly called "butcher-furniture." His earlier furniture is his best, and what an excellent best it was we may judge by the examples in the Metropolitan Museum—the fine sofas with delicately reeded arms and legs, the chairs with backs in the lyre motif that he loved, and legs showing the graceful concave curve of the Directoire. There is also a table which expresses the early Republican patriotism in the carved eagle of its pedestal, and several side chairs with carved eagle backs. As the demand for brass mountings came in, he yielded to it. He strung his lyres with brass strings, and fitted

brass lion-paws to the feet of tables. But he used the brasswork with refinement. His later furniture retains his fine workmanship, but the designs increasingly suffered from the demands of his patrons for vulgarity and ostentation.

With the advent of the Adam mode, its refined proportions and delicate motifs appeared in the designs of wall papers, fabrics, vases and dishes, metals. One of the rooms in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum has a wall paper with design of classic figures, medallions, urns, and flowers, in blue, rose, and green against a brown background. Never was American silver more beautiful than under the Adam influence, with its elliptical or polygonal teapots mounted on little trays, its urn-shaped coffeepots, sugar bowls, and cream pitchers. Dishes were chiefly imported, but they too showed the influence of the Adam mode. The Wedgwood ware, with its classic figures relieved against backgrounds of blue, green, or lavender, was highly prized.

With the classic motifs of the early nineteenth century were mingled the patriotic emblems of a new and self-conscious Republic. In the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum are several urn-shaped vases decorated with portraits of Washington, Franklin, Lafayette, or with American scenes—a view of New York from Governor's Island, for example, or one from the Elysian Fields in Hoboken. There is also a *toile de jouy* which represents, in true French heroic vein, an apotheosis of Washington and Franklin. The eagle was a favorite motif, screaming from the tops of mirrors, clocks, and girandoles, carved to form the pedestals and backs of chairs, or inlaid in desk fronts, chair legs, the pediments of secretaries, the doors of clocks. In a silver service presented by Washington to his adopted daughter, it tops

the lids of the urn-shaped coffeepot, teapot, and sugar bowl. Mantelpieces were decorated with Washington and Franklin in "compo," or with such patriotically moving scenes as the battle of Lake Erie. The designs of china made for the American market utilized American motifs. A set of Lowestoft which belonged to Martha Washington had on each piece a chain of thirteen links, and in each link the name of one of the Thirteen States. The popular luster ware was made with American scenes for the American market, and the famous blue Staffordshire ware affords a whole picture gallery of American heroes, American landscapes, and American buildings.

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No sooner had the Roman revival got well under way than it was supplanted by a Greek revival. Pantheons gave way to Parthenons. Roman domes were supplanted by cupolas which reproduced the Choragic monument of Lysicrates. Churches, banks, and public buildings simulated Greek temples. Public monuments took the form of Greek columns, with the commemorated hero riding atop like St. Simeon Stylites. Private houses, if they were pretentious, were Greek temples in everything except the arrangement of the interior and the absence of sculptured friezes, metopes, and pediments. So general did the Greek style become that during the years from 1820 to 1860 it appeared wherever the pioneers halted on their westward march. Not content with turning the logs of their cabins on end to form the pillars of their porticoes, the emigrants that poured into the western regions during the 'thirties sprinkled Greek names along their line of march—Romes and Ithacas, Syracuses and Spartas—which proved their relation with their ancient

prototypes in nothing save their portico-lined streets, and none too convincingly even in those.

The Greek revival, first introduced into America by Latrobe, was in the beginning simply one phase of a movement which was afoot in Europe. The drawings of the buildings on the Acropolis, by Stuart and Revett, had stirred the English imagination in the latter half of the eighteenth century and had inspired an increasing use of Greek ornament and the Greek orders. In Germany, Winckelmann's studies of Greek art had aroused a widespread enthusiasm and—what was more important—had profoundly affected the development of Goethe, who owed to the writings of the older man much of his large and serene habit of thought. Goethe and Schiller both wrote plays in the classic style, and Goethe chose the classic hexameter for his beautiful *Roman Elegies*. The builders followed the poets, and the Greek revival in the German-speaking nations proceeded with true German regard for scholarly correctness, resulting in a number of monumental buildings which faithfully reproduced the letter of the Greek orders without recapturing even a glimmer of the Greek spirit. In France, Napoleon as Emperor saw in himself a reincarnation of Alexander and sought, powerfully abetted by artists and writers, to impose a whole Imperial art based on a conception of classicism that remained much more French than Greek.

In every country, indeed, which was touched by the Greek revival, the results were more eloquent of that country's spirit than the spirit of Phidias or Callicrates. This was natural and inevitable, and America was no exception to the rule. If America was, as Mr. Fiske Kimball says, the leader in pressing the classic revival to its extreme consequences; if Jefferson's version of the

Greek Revival. Andalusia on the Delaware

Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Museum, Memorial Hall, Philadelphia

Early Nineteenth Century Interior. Room by SAMUEL McINTIRE

Maison Carrée preceded any such European adaptation, and if Americans were housing their banks and legislatures and even their families in Greek temples long before European architects had dared go to such extremes of fatuity; it was because the decline of eighteenth-century taste proceeded much more rapidly in America than in Europe. It required the complacent ignorance of the parvenu to see in a young and raw republic whose people neither knew art nor greatly cared to know it, a reincarnation of the glory that was Greece; to be insensitive to the incongruity of housing under Greek porticoes a people whose "coarse-minded" attitude toward the incomparable art of Greece caused the casts from Greek sculptures in the art academies to be defaced in unspeakable ways. Only a people which took itself with humorless seriousness could think to prove its greatness by strutting in the borrowed garb of a great and alien past. Only a people which had lost all sense of the essential relation between architecture and life would have endured the inconvenience of an architecture of exteriors, well adapted to the needs of a people which lived most of its life in the open and not at all to those of a people forced by a northern climate to conduct most of its activities indoors. The interiors of these Greek temple-houses were cast into perpetual gloom by the heavy columns and pediments; the roofs were too flat to shed the snow, and consequently leaky. If, in spite of these drawbacks, Americans pressed the Greek revival to lengths unparalleled in Europe, it was not merely because American sympathy with a modern Greek revolution gave further impetus to imitation of ancient Greek forms. That sympathy stirred Europe as well. Rather it was because Greek columns and pediments represented in their minds the impeccable taste toward which, in the cultural poverty

induced by their too rapid material expansion, they wistfully aspired. The Greek revival was a half-hearted gesture toward the beautiful; the first of those attempted short cuts to culture which have characterized a people that would like to be cultivated if only it might find some way to do so without expending the time and energy that cultivation demands.

The Greek revival, as I have remarked, was fathered by Latrobe, who brought his knowledge of Greek forms from England. His first American building in Greek temple form was the Bank of Pennsylvania, built at the beginning of the nineteenth century. He is said to have remarked that the bank's directors insisted that he copy the Parthenon. He can hardly have meant it literally, for with its porticoes, one at each front—with Ionic, not Doric columns—the building combined the dome of the Pantheon. Latrobe's later design for the Bank of the United States was more like the Parthenon, although its Doric columns were confined to the two fronts. Nicholas Biddle of Philadelphia, who had been in Greece, became the arbiter of Greek taste, promoting the revival in his magazine the *Port-Folio,* and pushing it to the extreme in enlarging his house on the Delaware River, by carrying the columns all the way around. Latrobe's pupil, Robert Mills, introduced the Greek-column form in the Washington Monument at Baltimore, and built the Treasury at Washington, with its Ionic pillars. For the Washington Monument in the national capital, he adopted the form of the shaft, and with true Draconian restraint, as Mr. Tallmadge remarks, refused to add so much as a scratch of ornamentation. He also built numerous customs-houses, mints, and subtreasuries for the Federal government, all Greek, and all marked by his characteristic restraint. To William Strickland belongs the

distinction of having first set the monument of Lysicrates atop an American building, in lieu of the dome which American taste demanded—an example which the architect of the courthouse at Petersburg, Virginia, carried to the extreme of forming a sort of steeple by piling several copies of this useful monument one upon the other. Thomas U. Walter, the last important figure of the revival, designed the gorgeous white marble temple of Girard College, with its peripteral colonnade of Corinthian columns.

But the revival soon got out of the hands of the professional architects. With the style securely established, men planned their own houses in collaboration with carpenter-architects. The carpenter-architect of this period, however, was a very different person from his forerunner, the journeyman-carpenter of Colonial days. Where the Colonial builder had been steeped in the traditions of his craft, and had a wholesome respect for the honest use of his materials, the builder of the Greek revival was merely solicitous to obtain a Greek effect with the materials he happened to have at hand—attempting with columns of wood, cast iron, or brick and stucco, to imitate the marble of Greek temples. And as might be expected of a style based on books rather than the needs of the people and the honest use of materials in meeting these needs, the farther it got from its sources the less Greek did this architecture become, until by the time of its ultimate disappearance, in 1860, it had degenerated in most communities into an illiterate reminiscence.

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The Greek revival did not hold undisputed sway. The period was really one of disintegration—a disintegration of which the "faking" of classical forms was only one

aspect. So was the decline of taste only one aspect—indeed this decline resulted from the same causes that brought about that of architecture.

First among these causes was the speculative westward expansion. The frontier, so long as it existed, was a decisive factor in American life. While there was free land, American citizens would be free, for independent tillage would always be a possible alternative to other pursuits. Wages therefore would be adequate and the people prosperous. This was highly desirable; had it been the only effect of the frontier, it would have been an unqualified blessing. Unfortunately, however, the story of westward expansion is not that of a gradual movement in response to the actual needs of the population. On the contrary, it is one of the most depressing chapters in American life. For along with honest folk looking for land on which they might make a decent and independent living went a horde of grabbers and speculators, encouraged by a national government which made little or no effort to conserve the country's resources. Never were richer resources to be had for the simple pre-emption; and the race to monopolize this vast potential wealth turned the whole energy of the country westward. Boom-towns sprang up like mushrooms and disappeared as quickly. Land constantly changed hands as the influx of population sent values soaring. The story is too long to tell. Suffice it to say that the diaspora gave for decades a character of restlessness and impermanence to American life.

What was worse, it promoted deterioration in the quality of life. The frontier should have made for democracy in America; it did make for democracy, if democracy may be defined as equality of opportunity for free men to pre-empt as much of the national domain

Courtesy of the New York Public Library

CHURCH. Cotopaxi

RUSH. Nymph and the Bittern (Nymph of the Schuylkill) *Fairmount Park, Philadelphia*

as they can, by one means or another, get their hands on. In a country where the laborer of today may be the millionaire of tomorrow, the lines of caste can never be very rigid. But to speak of such a situation as democracy is like applying the word to a gold-rush. It puts a premium upon vulgarity, sharp practice, and unscrupulous opportunism; and therefore it fosters that conception of democracy which Chesterton defines as the assumption that all men should be equally uncivil—a conception which is always reflected in the social life and culture of a people whose thought it dominates.

The development of machine industry coincided with the era of the speculating pioneer; and the smoke and filth of mines, railways, and factories made life hideous, as feverish material expansion made it poor. Here, as in England, the system was accompanied by the utilitarianism invoked to make the filth and the bad odors—and the ruthless exploitation of industrial labor—seem not merely necessary but desirable. And here, as there, this utilitarianism found expression not in philosophy alone but in the stark ugliness of factory buildings and the wretched housing of workers lured from Europe to the "land of promise." The era of mechanical progress in America has wrought marvels in the way of comfort and convenience; it has given scope for inventive genius of the highest order. But its destructive effect upon the quality of life has by no means been obviated. The nineteenth century made a virtue of that destruction, by accepting the utilitarian philosophy with the whole-heartedness of the Puritan conviction that life is earnest and should be cheerless, and that there is really very little place in it for leisure and the arts. The Greek revival, and the Gothic, were the half-hearted gestures of an enfeebled self-preserving instinct, but it was precisely the

enfeebled condition of that instinct that made them possible at all.

All artistic pursuits reflected these disintegrating forces; but architecture more than any. Being of all the arts that which is most closely related to material needs, it was unable to withstand the conflicting demands of the stark utilitarianism of the factory system and the sickly romanticism that reacted against it. Confronted with these demands, and the other demand for impermanence which accompanied an age of speculative and makeshift building, it lost, as Mr. Mumford well says, its independent value for the spirit and degenerated into a symptom—a symptom of the spiritual malaise brought on by the universal attempt to substitute physical for spiritual well-being.

The romantic movement of the nineteenth century had great value for the human spirit, but it did not find a happy expression in the nostalgic attempt, in architecture, to return to the Gothic style. The Gothic had admirably expressed the mediæval spirit, because it was of that spirit, as the architecture of Greece had expressed the genius of the Greek people. But the Gothic style was no better adapted than the classic style to the spirit of the nineteenth century. Nothing better reflects the helplessness of a people whose whole life was undergoing an unprecedented dissolution and readjustment than the attempt to borrow from a dead past a means of expression which its own spiritual chaos rendered it incapable of creating for itself. The Gothic revival that shared the field of architecture with the Greek revival had no more than this latter the vitality necessary to win that field to itself. It was an architecture of anachronisms and shoddy imitations. If it produced, in a few buildings such as Upjohn's Trinity Church and Renwick's St.

Patrick's Cathedral, honest structures which (at a safe distance of three thousand miles from their great prototypes) carry a certain artistic conviction, in its more popular manifestations it was as illiterate, as devoid of any significance save that of sentimental make-believe, as in those of the Greek revival. What else was there for architecture, under the circumstances, but to join in the general confusion of a dynamic but inchoate period, and, borrowing widely from the grammar of foreign modes, to shout inanities in many tongues? The ignorant eclecticism that followed the Greek and Gothic revivals was perhaps a healthier manifestation of the American spirit, as it was most certainly a more candid one, than any false show of classic serenity or mediæval aspiration.

If architecture declined in the first half of the nineteenth century, the old handicrafts disappeared before the incursion of the machine; and the industrial art of the century reflected not only the decline in the national temper, but also the demoralization that accompanies any revolutionary change in tools. For a time men's minds were engrossed in the perfection of the tool, and their judgment of its product was suspended by wonder at the apparent magic which brought it to being. This state of mind is reflected in the avidity with which they accepted in lieu of the craftsman's carving, the fantastic products of the scroll-saw as ornamentation for houses and furniture, and in architecture the ubiquitous cast-iron orders and ornaments, sanded and painted in imitation of stone.

There was no branch of industrial art which did not deteriorate. The forms of silver vessels became, with rare exceptions, heavy and clumsy, the decoration vulgarly ornate. The old German slipware disappeared before the increasing number and cheapness of commercial

wares. The commercial development of stoneware and fine porcelain during the nineteenth century is an interesting story, but its interest is historical rather than artistic. As for furniture, its decline has already been illustrated in the career of Duncan Phyfe. The severely plain parlors of the Greek revival, and the fantastic interiors of the Gothic revival and the era of confusion, were filled with monstrosities of rosewood and black walnut with machine-turned legs and scroll-sawed backs, upholstered in the ubiquitous and inhospitable black horsehair and doubtfully embellished (chairs and sofas) with the antimacassars rendered necessary by a fashion as unpleasant as that of horsehair and black walnut.

The impoverishment of life was not peculiar to America. In England, Ruskin inveighed against the cruelty and sordid ugliness of the industrial age, and Matthew Arnold in essays serious and satirical weighed and found wanting the value of the utilitarian philosophy for the human spirit. In France and Germany taste reached a level of abasement unparalleled in any previous age. I have spoken of disintegration; but the nineteenth century was also a century of reintegration, following the confusion that revolution always entails—in this case two revolutions, that which signalized the political triumph of the bourgeoisie, and that which signalized the industrial triumph of the machine. With all its ugliness it was an age of wonders, not alone in the field of science and mechanics, but in the field of art. If it produced the filth and squalor of industrialism, it also produced, in England great literature, in Germany great music, in France great painting and sculpture—and literature too; one must not forget Stendhal and Renan and Hugo. If in America its achievements in art and letters may not be compared with those of other countries, they were none

the less worthy of respect, as we shall see in later chapters; all the more so since the artist in America necessarily worked against rather than with the spirit of his age, and under the handicap of its prevailing cultural poverty. As for the agricultural and industrial expansion that absorbed American energies, while one may regret its economic unsoundness, one must admire the courage, the imagination, and the high order of ability that characterized many of its aspects. Nor should one forget that this century, in America, was one of remarkable achievements—some of them epoch-making—in science and invention; and of humanitarian movements of widespreading influence. Because we shall often have occasion, in succeeding chapters, to take note of the unlovely aspects of American life in their relation to American art, it is well to remember that, given the conditions of their environment, our forefathers did the best they could, and that when one considers the prodigies they performed in establishing the framework of civilization throughout a vast continent, one is bound to admit that in spite of the crudities and weaknesses which must be taken into account, their best was amazingly good.

Chapter Five

Materialism and Art

ON MARCH 4, 1829, Andrew Jackson was inaugurated as President, and the "rich and well-born" were horrified by the riotous impropriety of his followers who had crowded into Washington to participate in the triumph of their hero. Having acclaimed him from Capitol to White House, the multitude surged in after him and made havoc with the furniture and crockery in their efforts to get a sight of him. The scene was unprecedented. "The reign of King Mob seemed triumphant." The new democracy, the democracy of agricultural imperialism and "easy money," had at last gained a temporary ascendency in the national councils. Jackson, a man of the people, without education, whose fortune came from speculation on the frontier, succeeded John Quincy Adams, the last of the presidents who represented the régime that had made the Revolution—the last representative, that is, of the Colonial culture, a man who "viewed public service as a kind of *noblesse oblige* to be kept untainted by the vulgar odors of loot and spoils." Three years before Jackson's inauguration, John Adams, who had favored "government by an aristocracy of talents and wealth," and Thomas Jefferson, who had championed the producing against the speculating interest, had died within

a few hours of one another. In 1828 died Gilbert Stuart, last American exponent of the eighteenth-century tradition in art. The period of transition was over; a new era in American life was opened definitely, and as it were officially.

It was an era of dynamic activity: of sharp political conflict among the three major economic interests—the rapidly industrializing North, the slave-owning, cotton-growing South, and the pioneering, speculating hordes that were pouring into the unsettled western regions—of annexation and expansion, of immigration; of one foreign war and many brushes with Indians on the frontier; of popular movements, political, religious, and economic; of wildcat speculation and financial panics; a period, in Emerson's words, of "madmen and women, men with beards, Dunkers, Muggletonians, Come-outers, Groaners, Agrarians, Seventh-day Baptists, Quakers, Abolitionists, Unitarians, and Philosophers." It was also an age of unprecedented material development: of railways, steamships, factories; of multiplying mechanical inventions that ushered in profound changes in the economic life and the social organization. And from the application of mechanical processes of production to the apparently unlimited natural resources of a new country, flowed such a stream of wealth as the world had never known, giving prosperity and leisure to classes that had never before possessed a great amount of either.

Nor did the vitality of the period find its only outlet in economic and political activity, and mass movements for religious or social reforms. The friction created by the conflict of economic systems and by the profound social changes that followed the progress of science and invention, aroused an intellectual ferment that resulted in a widespread demand for increased educational facili-

ties; a demand which was met by the opening of public schools and universities, and by an enormous increase in the number of newspapers, books, and magazines. Thus an age whose democratic incivility was scored and ridiculed by foreign observers, was also an age which laid the foundations of a national culture. The America of economic opportunism and execrable manners which Charles Dickens caricatured so mercilessly, gave scope to an important scientific and historical research and a high quality of literary production. If it coveted European approval and resented European strictures with the cultural uncertainty of the parvenu, it none the less produced, in the older and less unsettled northeastern section of the country, a group of writers whose work still holds a place in world literature of the nineteenth century. *Godey's Lady's Book* and the sentimental novel represent only one side of its literary culture; on the other appear the names of Cooper and Irving, Emerson and Thoreau, Hawthorne and Melville, Prescott, Parkman and Motley, Whitman, Poe, and Emily Dickinson.

It was also a period of respectable if not brilliant artistic effort. Architecture, to be sure, was disintegrating, but the forces which brought about its decline, although they had their effect on the other arts, did not touch them so directly. The painter or sculptor could ignore conditions which were of vital consequence to the architect. The sculptors of the period, indeed, escaped them by taking up their residence in Italy; and their work consequently relates rather to the diluted classicism of the school of Thorwaldsen than to the *Sturm und Drang* of American life. The painters, however, although many of them studied abroad, did not, save in a few cases, expatriate themselves, and their work, if it reflects the life of the period in no other way, is eloquent of its

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

RIMMER. Dying Centaur

Courtesy of the Worcester Art Museum

HUNT. The Bathers

lack of any vital interest in or knowledge of the graphic and plastic arts. That ardent partisanship which characterized the period produced riots over slavery and religion, but only once did it find such exuberant expression in the field of culture, and then the occasion was the perfectly legitimate appearance of an English actor in the American theater. The motive was patriotic rather than æsthetic. Of that popular participation in the art-spirit which caused even the children to fling taunts at Manet in the streets of Paris, there was no possibility in the America of the middle period. The energies of the people were drawn into "the vortex of politics and utilitarianism" of which Thomas Cole complained. Talent that in another age might have found its expression in the arts, was engrossed in the invention and improvement of mechanical processes. America was too much absorbed in its own material development to make more than perfunctory obeisance before the shrine of art. That very friction which stimulated literary production hampered artistic effort by creating an atmosphere in which art could not breathe at its fullest.

There were other reasons, too, why the age of Emerson and Whitman developed no talent of universal importance in graphic and plastic art. The artistic poverty of which I spoke in the foregoing chapter continued to retard proficiency in the artist and taste even in that small section of the public which took an interest in art. There was no reason for a poet or philosopher to be unversed in the work of his predecessors; for books were to be had easily and cheaply, especially since the power-press had facilitated printing. Nor was there, by the same token, any compelling reason for general ignorance of literature. But the artist who wished to profit by the labors of his forebears must make an ex-

pensive sojourn in Europe; while of the millions of Americans who bought books and magazines, the vast majority would never see a good picture, save through the devitalizing medium of the engraved reproduction. Nor could the artist himself, by merely visiting Europe, even though he remained for several years, *get into the tradition* as he would have if the works of the masters had been his lifelong exemplars. Lacking their constant inspiration and guidance, and having no substitute but the ignorant praise or blame of his compatriots, the most talented American artist could not hope to reach the heights attainable by his more fortunately situated European contemporaries.

When the American student or the American collector did turn to Europe, he was not equipped with the knowledge requisite to get the best that Europe had to offer. It is a commonplace that the traveler brings home what he takes with him. The American student of art or the American buyer, knowing nothing better than the mediocre, was likely to succumb to the rampant mediocrity of the European school, that was filling the homes of a newly emerged and ignorant bourgeoisie with canvases remarkable only for the technical virtuosity that an unformed taste mistakes for plastic meaning; canvases in which mere anecdote does service for that profound significance which the mind of the artist perceives in the objects that serve him as pretext for proclaiming his sense of the wonder and mystery of things seen. Allston, in Italy, before the glowing canvases of the Venetians, had dimly sensed the true nature of art; but he was too much indoctrinated by the false ideas of the school to do more than guess the meaning of the masters; he could not share their vision. Thomas Cole, a romantic by temperament, found the work of his French contem-

poraries "cold," an adjective which makes one wonder whether he saw the flaming, surging canvases of Delacroix—or saw without understanding. All over Europe in the nineteenth century was spread like a blight the influence of the school, with its sterile formalism, its formulæ guaranteed to produce nobility of effect in the works of painters unendowed with nobility of spirit, and its passionate hostility to the men who disregarded its teaching in order that the great tradition which it pretended to guard might continue as a living force.

American artists of the period might sooner have become aware of this unprecedented cleavage between art and what popularly passed for art, had not circumstances led them at first rather to England, Italy, or Germany than to France. The influence of the German cultural renaissance was strong in America, and German universities were attracting many American students. This was well enough; in science and philosophy Germany had much to teach. But when American students of art turned for guidance to the School of Düsseldorf, they might get the knowledge of drawing, anatomy, perspective, that the school could give. Æsthetically, it was the blind turning to the blind. So it was, likewise, with the American sculptors who went to Italy, where, apart from the glorious living works of dead men, in temporary eclipse by the dead works of living men, nothing remained for the sculptor save abundance of marble and of skillful stonecutters who would execute his designs to the last exasperating detail.

Whether, therefore, the American artist remained at home or went abroad to study, he was handicapped by circumstances peculiar to his time and country. None the less, those who went abroad were in a much better position to overcome these handicaps than those who re-

mained at home. It was not only well, it was essential, for the development of American art that the painters and sculptors of the period should seek instruction abroad; not because of what the schools could give, but because in Europe alone they could study the great works of the past, and come in contact with contemporary masters. In one way they even profited by having to travel so far, for having no roots in any European country, they were more likely than the European student to move from one country to another, studying the masters and taking from the schools what seemed to them useful for the development of their own work. Nor was it, of course, only the artists who benefited by their contact with European art. The influence they exerted on American collectors after their return gradually made itself felt in the buying of better pictures, both of foreign and American painters. If Winslow Homer first realized before a canvas of Frère that he wished to do "something like that, only a damned sight better," a little later in the century Boston collectors were influenced by William Morris Hunt to buy the works of the Barbizon school; and through William M. Chase and J. Alden Weir, two canvases of Manet were purchased by a New York lawyer even while that great painter was still anathema to the Parisian public.

§

Although the period was more remarkable for the search of wealth than for the search of beauty, the number of artists continued to increase, and so did their opportunities. It was not authors only who were benefited by the introduction of the power-press. The steadily multiplying illustrated books and magazines gave work to painters and engravers—books such as Herring and

Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

HUNT. The Flight of Night (*cartoon*)

Brown and Ward. Washington. *Union Square, New York*

Longacre's *National Portrait Gallery,* Harper's *Family Bible,* or the illustrated sets and gift books that found a large market; and such magazines as *Godey's Lady's Book, Ballou's Monthly,* and later *Harper's Weekly,* which sent Winslow Homer as special correspondent and artist to the Civil War. Some of the foremost artists of the time were also illustrators—and one of the illustrators was among the foremost artists. The work of F. O. C. Darley is not as definitely outmoded as most of the contemporary painting. It shared somewhat in the sentimentality of the time—it would be hard to illustrate such an author as Cooper unsentimentally—but the quality of the drawing saves it from banality. There is nothing amateurish in the work of this self-taught man. His line is swift, sure, and expressive; and when free from the demands of a text he could display a quality of humor that is quite as amusing today as it ever was. Winslow Homer's career as illustrator began with *Ballou's Monthly,* but he soon removed to New York and began free-lancing. He began drawing for *Harper's Weekly* with the issue of August 1, 1857, and continued, though not regularly, until 1875. His first drawings would not attract attention were it not for the signature; but it is interesting to follow in *Harper's* the rapid development of his powerful realism.

What scant facilities there were for study were also improved and increased, although Puritan prudery did not cease to wield its blighting influence—that prudery whose perfect complement was the prurience which drew New Yorkers in crowds to those public exhibitions of female nakedness, masking as high art, that were a sort of psychic epidemic for a brief period in the 'forties. The false delicacy which aroused a storm of abusive protest against Horatio Greenough's little "Singing Cherubs"

seriously hampered the student of art in his study of anatomy. It was but slowly that the schools came to permit studies from the nude; and as late as 1863 the only anatomical instruction available to students in Boston was in the lectures on the subject by Dr. Wm. Rimmer, illustrated, in his unique manner, by drawings of the various bones and muscles. Means of instruction did improve, however. In New York, which, being the center of finance and commerce, also became the center of art during this period, the old American Academy was supplanted by the National Academy of Design, founded in 1825 by a group of artists dissatisfied with the unsympathetic attitude of the older institution toward students wishing to study its pictures and casts. Under the presidency of S. F. B. Morse, this new academy opened classes and held exhibitions, by these means helping both students and the public to a closer acquaintance with art. As the new institution waxed, the old one waned to ultimate disappearance, and the National Academy reigned undisturbed until in its turn it was outdistanced by the artists, as the school, burdened by precedent and the heavy letter of the law, is forever being outdistanced.

Other cities, too, had their schools and clubs devoted to the promotion of the arts. The collections of private individuals, and of such institutions as the Redwood Library, the Boston Athenæum, and the New York Historical Society, continued to grow in importance, until in 1867 Tuckerman could write that ". . . at Chicago, Albany, Buffalo, Philadelphia, Boston, and New York, there are native *ateliers,* schools or collections, the fame whereof has raised our national character and enhanced our intellectual resources as a people." The Art Union, in the dozen years of its existence, did much to stimulate popular interest in art. This organization was founded

in 1838, with an annual membership fee of five dollars. The money thus collected was used to buy pictures which, after being publicly exhibited, were distributed among the members by lot. The fee ensured the subscriber a copy of an engraving, and the bulletin of the organization. The prices paid were low, but the artists profited by the opportunity to get their works before the public. When the Union was finally dissolved as in violation of the law against lotteries, it had performed a valuable service in the popularization of art. The market for canvases that it had helped to stimulate was supplied by an increasing number of dealers both in supposititious old masters and in newer pictures of less doubtful authenticity by foreign and native artists. By the time of the Civil War, art in America was enjoying a modest prosperity commensurate, if not with the wealth of the inhabitants, at least with their degree of taste and knowledge.

§

There is of course no precise line of demarcation between the art of the first and second quarters of the nineteenth century. Several of the painters mentioned in the preceding chapter lived and worked well into the middle period. Washington Allston, with his high if mistaken ideals of art and his grandiose unsought pictorial projects, lived until 1843, and John Vanderlyn carried his weight of frustration until 1852, painting an occasional portrait, and dying at last in a penniless isolation symbolic of his life. Inman continued until 1846 to paint commonplace portraits, landscapes, and figure pieces. Thomas Sully's long career lasted until 1872, and one likes to remember that the city of Philadelphia, out of respect for the old painter, refrained until after his death from tearing down

the house in which he lived, to make way for a new street. Charles B. King, John Neagle, and Rembrandt Peale worked on past the middle of the century. So likewise did Ingham, Harding, and Alexander, producing portraits which show no great distinction of conception or treatment, but which are nevertheless much superior to the tinted photography of most of their younger contemporaries.

For portrait painting went into a serious decline during this period. If there is distinction in the work of a few survivors from the early Republican period, and in that of Hunt and Johnson during the third quarter of the century, that quality is rarely to be found in the works of Elliott, Huntington, and Healy, who were the most popular portrait painters of their day. Robert W. Weir painted a few fairly interesting portraits, but he is remembered chiefly for his landscapes and his "Embarkation of the Pilgrims" in the Rotunda of the national Capitol. Photography, which had its beginning in the 'thirties, had the twofold effect of lessening the demand for painted portraits and tempting the portrait painters to compete with the photographer by painting photographically. Miniature painting, indeed, was destroyed; the miniature painters either gave up their work entirely or continued to become more and more photographic until the art disappeared, to be revived only in the last years of the century. Among portrait painters in oil, Henry Peters Gray and William Page, both of whom spent many years in Italy, sometimes approached distinction; but their work was uneven, and remains rather a record of struggle to overcome the difficulties peculiar to their time than of positive artistic achievement. As for those painters who contented themselves with a near approach to the photographic, their work was perfectly

National Gallery, London

WHISTLER. The Little White Girl

WHISTLER. Rotherhithe (*etching*)

suited to the taste of the time, and therefore popular; for their sitters demanded nothing better than an exact rendition of superficial appearances: fabrics, laces, flowers, skin, that simulated reality and fell lamentably short of realization because the painter failed to respect the terms of his medium; he tried to make it appear to be something else.

There was a constant demand for sentimental story-telling, based upon the classics or the romantic literature of the day; and it was supplied by a host of men whose work, whether in the original canvases or their myriad engraved reproductions, has long since faded into unregrettable oblivion. There was also a market for the familiar scenes from everyday life of which I spoke in the preceding chapter. Of the earlier men whose work appealed to this taste, Mount is the only one who retains interest today. Eastman Johnson's scenes from rural life also had enough wit to keep them sweet, and because of his European study they were technically far ahead of Mount's. Winslow Homer's scenes from New England life and sympathetic studies of negro character were in their turn far ahead of Johnson's work in genre, although far behind the work of Homer's own maturity. But these pictures of Homer and Johnson really belong to the third quarter of the century and will be discussed later. Of most of the figure painting of the earlier period, it suffices to say that it was perfectly suited to the prevailing view of life and art. Indeed, it was its fidelity to the prevailing view that vitiated it; for it catered to that taste for the bathos which, says Swift, "is implanted by nature in the soul of man until, perverted by custom or example, he is taught to relish the sublime." I would not intimate that the taste of Americans for the bathos was peculiar to the period under discussion; but the fashion in bathos

has changed, so that what appealed to that taste in the "fabulous 'forties" has only quaintness to recommend it to a similar taste today.

Nor was the bathos by any means confined to anecdotal painting. It dominated portrait painting, and even the landscapists, who constituted the only well-defined school of the period and produced its most important work, were by no means immune to its influence. It was also plentifully accessible in the historical pieces that continued to be produced, sometimes in "ten-acre canvases," but more often in smaller pictures. The *chef d'œuvre* in this order of banality is Leutze's "Washington Crossing the Delaware," which an unperverted public opinion keeps on the wall of the Metropolitan Museum, its huge expanse excluding canvases more worthy to represent American art. Carefully composed according to the formulæ of the school; without a spark of imagination or of a painter's feeling for the play of light upon forms or the way color harmonies can sound and echo throughout a canvas; cold, conventional, and commonplace, this picture is a good example of what Düsseldorf could do for a man who had no idea beyond the rhetorical and the banal. In its utter want of appeal to any emotion save that of patriotism it is typical of the sort of thing that our grandfathers (and many of their descendants) found sufficient and edifying in pictorial art.

The most important development of the period was in landscape painting; and the works of the landscape painters had a popular appeal which proceeded rather from the familiarity of the scenes depicted than from such æsthetic quality as they possessed. In landscape, as in portraiture or pictorial anecdote, what the public wanted was a faithful rendition of superficial appearances; and the painters shared its ignorance and its taste.

They had no tradition to guide them; no conception of the essential harmonies of form and color to be discovered and rendered through the rigid subordination of the parts to the whole. They simply went to nature, to the beautiful scenery of the Hudson River Valley, the Catskills, or the White Mountains, studied it minutely and enthusiastically, and faithfully rendered in their canvases not only what they saw in the scenes before them but also what they knew to be there—the separate leaves and grasses of the foreground or the individual rocks and trees of the distance, which the eye perceives only as masses of form and color. The results delighted their contemporaries. But as the men in whose work the school culminated departed from this method in order to achieve through broader treatment a more lyrical interpretation, their work suffered in the estimation of a public which could not share in their discovery that the function of the artist is to reveal and interpret nature, rather than to transcribe it.

These were not the first Americans to paint landscapes; but they were the first to study nature in this way, the first to render the actual character of the American countryside. Such men as Birch and Doughty may be regarded as precursors of the school; but its founders were Thomas Cole and Asher B. Durand, who have been aptly termed the West and Copley of the movement. Durand, sincere and literal-minded, loving the beautiful country of the Catskills and the Hudson River, contented himself with painstaking transcription of the wooded hills, the glint of light on still water, and distant mountains seen through the pearly haze of summer. Cole, on the other hand, imaginative and deeply religious, succumbed to "the lie of the noble subject." He sought to edify the beholder by appealing to his moral sense; and like West,

in attaining his end he often sacrificed artistic sincerity. He was fond of painting series of allegorical landscapes, expressing thoughts and emotions which have no kinship to graphic or plastic art; series bearing such titles as "The Course of Empire," "The Voyage of Life," "The Cross and the World." And these homilies, appealing at once to the native taste for landscape and that for edification, enjoyed great popularity.

But Cole, who, although younger than Durand, began his career as a painter much earlier, was the first American painter to reverse, as he said, the process of "making up nature from his mind," and instead to make up his mind from nature. During his early struggles—the typical struggle of the young itinerant in a frontier community entirely ignorant of art—he took to making careful studies from nature, first of single objects, then of extended scenes. When one reads that upon his arrival in Philadelphia the landscapes of Birch and Doughty in the Academy caused his heart to sink at the thought of his own deficiency, one realizes not only how little the young painter knew but how poverty-stricken was the environment that could provide no better pictures to serve him as examples. In spite of his handicaps, however, his work improved until, by the time he moved to New York (about 1825), he was capable of painting landscapes that moved Trumbull, Dunlap, and Durand to enthusiastic praise and assistance. Thereafter he had plenty of commissions, and indeed he deserved them, for he was the best landscape painter in the country.

A sojourn of two years in Europe seems to have had less effect in enlarging his conception of art and improving his execution than in confirming his disposition to seek for the sublime not through the quality of his work but through the nature of his subjects. And as his

romantic-religious fantasy was allowed freer rein in his pictures, his artistic sincerity yielded before it. His landscapes became romantically improbable in structure, thin and dry in manner. It is not exceptional, of course, for the painter to take liberties with nature. There is the familiar example of the Rubens taken by Goethe to illustrate the painter's superiority to Nature, in which the shadows fall in two directions. But where the purpose of Rubens in thus departing from nature was to make a better picture, Cole's purpose in fabricating crags fantastically shaped, theatrical skies, and gloomy shadows, was simply to provide the appropriate stage setting for his moral drama.

It was after his return from Europe in 1832 that he began his first landscape-drama, under the generous patronage of Luman Reed, whom Dunlap describes as "standing among the greatest benefactors of the fine arts, and the most purely disinterested our country can boast." For Mr. Reed's gallery in Greenwich Street Cole painted a five-part pictorial drama which portrayed the rise and fall of empire, in a romantic landscape bearing evidences of a distant acquaintance with Claude. From "The Savage State," in which the morning mists still linger on the hills, to "Desolation," in which the rising moon casts its light on ruined columns, the course of empire is graphically followed through the pastoral stage, the stage of material splendor, and that of destruction by barbarous invaders. Cole was not satisfied with this work. He wrote to Dunlap that he knew he had a grand subject but that as he proceeded he felt that all his gold was turning to clay. Perhaps somewhere deep in him stirred the knowledge that this was not quite exact; that he had merely mistaken clay for gold.

Yet, having noted his false intention, one cannot help

being impressed by this painter's imaginative power, and the talent which enabled him to build so well on a very slight foundation of knowledge. In a more cultivated environment these qualities might have led him to pure painting of a high order; as it was, his sensitive, romantic nature had no better spiritual food than "politics and utilitarianism," and the current taste for the bathos. If he shared this taste and catered to it, he may have done more to promote an interest in art through the popularity that his work enjoyed than if he had painted unnoticed masterpieces. For masterpieces, in any case, neither painters nor public were yet ready.

An entirely dissimilar temperament kept Durand from repeating Cole's error when at last he abandoned his place as America's foremost engraver in order to become a painter. He began his career with portraits which show a sincerity and a power of characterization considerably beyond that of such rising young portrait painters as Healy and Huntington; but after a trip abroad he abandoned portrait painting and thereafter devoted himself to the painting of landscape. He adopted the practice, then exceptional, of painting not merely his sketches but his large canvases in the open air, and his landscapes are enveloped in the haze which neutralizes the strong colors of the Hudson River Valley on a sunny day in summer. Being thus almost monochromatic, they usually escape that crudity of color which makes many works of his school more acceptable in photographs than in the originals; and if his landscapes often have an insubstantial look, they compare well enough in this respect too, with other works of the school. He had little idea of composition, simply taking a view that interested him—a woodland brook or a vista of lake and mountains—and filling in its every detail with his engraver's minuteness.

It is in his beautiful rendition of detail, indeed, that his greatest charm lies—in this and the profound sincerity that characterized everything he did.

His was pretty generally the method of the Hudson River school, as the pupils and associates of Cole and Durand came to be known—men enthusiastic in their discovery of American landscape and meticulously exact in transcribing it. In spite of the differences of manner induced by temperament and training, they have the same fundamental characteristics which proceeded from a common ignorance of the meaning of art. No detail of form or color was subordinated for the sake of harmonious effect; and at their worst, the results of this method are wonderfully crude. Nor was there any attempt at composition: the scene depicted is not contained within the frame, but is merely carefully noted to the limits of the canvas; there is no æsthetic reason why it should not be indefinitely extended. In their panoramic quality, their almost total want of style, they were the lineal forerunners of the works produced by the modern railway school of landscapists who help to advertise the scenic glories of American routes.

But they were lineal forerunners, too, of works showing a broader conception and a more summary treatment. If Inness, Wyant, and Martin were able to attain to something like synthesis, it was the painstaking analysis of the earlier men that made synthesis possible; if in no other way, by demonstrating the weakness of the method. Wanting that familiarity with the great tradition of painting which would have enabled a short cut to knowledge, they were obliged to build painfully from the beginning; and they could no more have been expected to perceive and render immediately the harmonies of form and color underlying the superficial appearances so carefully stated

in their canvases, than the musical performer could be expected to grasp the structure of a composition and the interrelation of the voices before he had mastered the notes. When they turned to Europe, their ignorance was an obstacle to their advancement. Where Delacroix, the greatest and most learned painter of his time, was able to find in the landscapes of Constable a principle which revolutionized French painting of the nineteenth century, that of the division of colors, the American Sanford Gifford could find nothing to learn from the French and English schools of landscape painting.

To Europe they went, nevertheless, these early landscape painters, and profited by what they saw according to inclination or aptitude. Some of them were there but little; others, like Kensett, Cropsey, and Whittredge, remained for several years. Those who sought school training went to Düsseldorf, and either rejected its teaching after a short time, as did Wyant; spent a good deal of time later in unlearning what they had acquired, like Kensett and Whittredge; or, like Bierstadt, carried its faults with them throughout their lives. Inness was the first to discover the French landscape painters. When he first went abroad in 1847, he spent fifteen months in Rome, but on his second visit he remained in Paris; and the influence of the Barbizon school is evident in the work of his later years, after he had succeeded in emancipating himself from the panoramic method which characterizes his earlier work.

Although this method is common to the painters of the Hudson River school, they were nevertheless divided into two rather definite groups by a difference of intention. Those who followed Durand—Casilear, Kensett, Whittredge, Cropsey, and others—may be regarded as the realists of the school. The other group, whose lead-

WHISTLER. Nocturne (*lithograph*)

From a Copley Print. Copyright by Curtis & Cameron, Publishers, Boston

LE FARGE. The Ascension

ing figure was F. E. Church, were the romantics who, like Cole, looked for inspiration in noble subjects. Church was not only a follower but also a pupil of Cole. He did not, however, follow his master's example in the use of allegorical subjects. His idea of edifying was to seek out and depict the marvelous or the grandly picturesque. The scenery of the Hudson River did not satisfy his craving for the grandiose. He wandered over the earth in search of magnificent subjects—to Niagara Falls, to the Andes, to northern waters where he might paint huge icebergs, to Greece and the islands of the Ægean. And not only did he choose scenes which were marvelous in themselves; he liked to add to their impressiveness by introducing gorgeous and awesome atmospheric effects—the sinister gloom thrown upon a landscape by clouds of smoke rolling from a volcano, reddening the sun and its reflection upon the lake; the glow of sunset upon the yellowed marble of the Acropolis, enhanced by the somber shadow of the foreground; or an island of the Ægean, its ruined temples and ancient tombs, melancholy reminders of a past glory, suffused with the present glory of a storm-vexed sun and gorgeous rainbows. He rendered these chosen effects with a technical virtuosity worthy of a better understanding of the meaning of painting. One is left with no doubt about the actual appearance of the scene. If panorama were all that one looked for in landscape painting, Church's work would leave little to be desired. Tuckerman remarks with admiration that if one looks at his "Niagara Falls" through a tube, one gets an impression of looking at the reality instead of the counterfeit—a conception of excellence in art which, it may be said for the comfort of those who entertain it, is at least as old as Plato and Aristotle.

Church's romantic landscapes were highly regarded in their day, and one cannot wonder at it, for in spite of their unsoundness they have a certain impressiveness. Even Ruskin, who had commented on the wonderful ugliness of American landscape painting, found a grudging good word for "Cotopaxi," though he remarked that the painter "does not yet know the meaning of painting and I suppose he never will." The success of Church's colleague Bierstadt is more difficult to understand. One must suppose it was due to the subjects of his pictures, and their enormous size. His Rocky Mountain scenes enjoyed wide popularity and brought staggering prices; but today they retain none of the interest that attaches to Church's best efforts. Bierstadt had acquired all the faults of the Düsseldorf school. His impressive subjects are rendered with pedestrian competence. The color is unpleasant, the handling is exasperatingly literal. The total effect is of a complete want of vitality. Beside these great, dead canvases, the less pretentious pictures of such men as Kensett, McEntee, or Cropsey, thin as they are and often inharmonious in color, seem almost excellent, for with all their defects they have at least the virtues of sincerity and genuine emotion.

American panoramic painting culminated in the landscapes of Church and Bierstadt. Sanford Gifford sought picturesque subjects, but he was less interested in overwhelming the beholder than in achieving harmony in the picture through the use of successive glazings which give the impression of viewing the scene through a hazy atmosphere. Mignot, who accompanied Church to South America, painted somewhat in his manner, and William Bradford followed his example of going to Labrador to study icebergs. But in spite of their success, Church and Bierstadt exercised no great influence on younger painters.

Too many new influences were at work—that of the Barbizon group, discovered by Inness and Hunt, and somewhat later that of Munich, with its bold and brilliant imitations of the "smoked and rancid" works of the great masters. Both American painting and American sculpture show a marked change in character after the Civil War. But before discussing these changes it is necessary first to consider the beginnings of American sculpture.

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The first notable effort by American sculptors came during the middle period, if one except the work of William Rush, who produced a few allegorical figures and portrait heads during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Those economic and social conditions which retarded the development of painting had been even more effective in preventing the appearance of sculpture. The early Colonists brought no sculptures with them, nor any tradition of sculpture; and the puritanical association of evil with the flesh naturally discouraged early attempts at an art whose noblest achievements have been made in the representation of the nude form. "In founding a school of art," wrote Greenough two centuries later, "we have an obstacle to surmount, viz., a puritanical intolerance thereof." In spite of this intolerance, however, sculptured portraits and monuments might have made an early appearance had not the stone found in the colonies been so refractory as to discourage not only the sculptor but even the stonecutter. We have seen that for this reason the eighteenth-century builders usually substituted wood for stone where they wished to employ carved detail. Colonial sculpture of the eighteenth century, therefore—and there was little enough of it—was the imported work of foreign artists, if one ex-

cept the portraits in wax which became fashionable in the middle of the eighteenth century, and in which the proficiency of Patience Wright gained her the title of "the Promethean modeller." The rich colonists of the eighteenth century imported a few casts or copies in marble from foreign works, and several public monuments were brought from England during the period. But so backward was American sculpture that when the Legislature of Virginia voted to erect a statue of Washington, it was necessary to bring Houdon from France to execute it; and so vulgar was American taste that when Robert Edge Pine brought over a cast of the Venus de' Medici, he kept it shut up in a case lest its exposure outrage the moral sense of those Americans who might see it.

The wood-carver faced no such obstacle as the stone-cutter. Wood was plentiful, and its use in the ornamentation of homes and ships offered ample opportunity to the craftsman. It is not surprising, therefore, that the first American sculptor was a carver of ships' figureheads. None of William Rush's figureheads is extant; but they were famous in their day. Of his other works a few remain to show us what manner of sculptor he was. That there are not more is no doubt due to his having worked exclusively in wood and clay. When one considers that he was the pioneer of his art in America, one is surprised and impressed by what he achieved. His work shows an originality and power that are to be looked for in vain in the sculptors who succeeded him, men whose native talent was not robust enough to withstand the vitiating influence of the neo-classic school. His "Nymph and the Bittern," generally known as "Nymph of the Schuylkill," extant in a bronze replica, not only shows these qualities, but has a grace and elegance in the pose of the figure and the handling of the draperies that

Private Collection. Courtesy of the John Levy Art Gallery

HOMER. Eight Bells

HOMER. The Bather (*water color*)

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

give it genuine distinction; and his curious self-portrait in the Pennsylvania Academy, a head carved from a pine knot which in its rough state forms the shoulders, betrays a power of characterization unsurpassed in the more conventional portraits of his successors. But it is not only what he produced that gives William Rush importance in the history of American sculpture. He was a prominent citizen of Philadelphia, a member of the City Council; and thus he was able to exert a considerable influence in the promotion of public interest in an art then little known and less understood. He was one of the small group which joined in the attempts of Charles Wilson Peale to found a school of art in Philadelphia; and when the present Academy was finally established he became one of its directors, continuing in that capacity until his death.

The work of Rush was a native product; he never went abroad. Two younger sculptors whose work never knew the influence of a foreign school were John Frazee and Hezekiah Augur. Frazee, who reached sculpture by way of stonecutting, executed some memorials and a number of portrait busts which showed both strength and sincerity. To this sculptor belongs the distinction of having carved the first marble bust executed in this country. Hezekiah Augur, after a disastrous attempt to live up to his family's idea of respectability by engaging in business, finally reached sculpture by way of wood-carving, spurred thereto by the encouragement of Morse and others. His work is small in quantity; the circumstances of his life were accountable for that; but it shows a decided talent and a skill which is surprising when one remembers that there were among his family and associates neither artists nor lovers of art.

But the conditions of American life and the peculiar

demands of the art of sculpture required that American sculptors, if they wished to master the technique of their art, should go abroad for study. There were no works to be seen in America, if one except a few casts from the antique, in the academies at Philadelphia and New York and in the Boston Athenæum. Marble had to be imported at great expense, and stonecutters demanded high wages. In Italy, on the other hand, marble was abundant, and the wages of Italian stonecutters were a fraction of the American wage. Moreover, Italy was the treasure-house of classic and Renaissance masterpieces, and had a flourishing school—such as it was—of contemporary sculptors. So to Italy the early American sculptors went to study and remained to live, among surroundings more congenial than those of their native land.

The first of the Italianates was Horatio Greenough, who discovered his vocation while still a boy, and having had the good fortune to be born of well-to-do parents was spared the struggle which hampered the efforts of Frazee and Augur. Tuckerman, with his usual sentimental flourishes, tells how the young man, on his arrival in Italy, was so overwhelmed by the wealth of art that the natives passed by with the indifference of custom, that he sought relief in tears. He was enthralled at first by the mighty genius of Michelangelo, and inclined to drink its heady inspiration. One wonders what the effect would have been upon American sculpture if he had been left to follow this impulse; but it was not to be. His countryman and first patron, James Fenimore Cooper, with a true Yankee sense of the practical, headed him off and set him in the way of popular if not artistic success. "I found him," said Cooper, "bent altogether on the Michelangelo or the heroic school; certainly a noble and commendable disposition in a sculptor, but one that was

not so well suited to the popular taste as that which is connected with the more graceful forms of children and females. . . . Thousands would be sensible of the beauty of a cherub who would have no feeling for the sublimity and mystery of the Moses of Buonarotti." So the soaring ambition of the young sculptor was safely perverted to the service of the prevailing taste for the bathos. He yielded himself up to the influence of the neo-classicism imposed upon sculpture by Canova and Thorwaldsen; availed himself of Thorwaldsen's instruction, produced the ideal figures and sentimental groups characteristic of a school which mistook emptiness for classic serenity and "dainty carving" for sculptural quality; and thereby sacrificed such individuality as his work might otherwise have developed.

The Italian orientation of Greenough and his immediate American successors in Italy precluded for a time any development in sculpture that might be regarded as distinctively American. Swept into the current of the strong Thorwaldsenian influence, they turned out works characterized by a profound misunderstanding of the art of sculpture and differing in no essential way from those proceeding from the studios about them. The audacious "Jackson" of Clark Mills, with its rearing steed ingeniously balanced on the hind feet, was more American than any of them, in its naïve disregard of anything more æsthetic than the purely mechanical problem of equilibrium. The American public was far better able to understand this triumphant solution of a mechanical problem than that of any problem in æsthetics. It is significant that while one school of American painters was struggling to master the alphabet of landscape painting, and another was reducing portraiture to photographic banality, an expatriate group of sculptors were

shipping home busts and ideal or historical groups as devoid of relation to the national temper and manners as of any kinship with great art. The time had not yet come for the spirit of America to find its natural expression in the arts; the painting and sculpture of the middle period do not constitute two essential aspects of the same attitude toward life, as they do in those countries where art is the flower of a deeply rooted national culture. They reflect only the artificial taste of a small group of people for the trivial and the sentimental. Thus if they can be said to reveal the American mind at all, it is only as two essential aspects of its ignorance.

An ignorance concerning which the public in general were less modest than the artists, perhaps because these knew enough to be aware of it. In the art literature of the day one finds complaints of the "indomitable self-confidence" with which the average American regarded his own ignorance as a sufficient criterion of art. The readiness of the sovereign American citizen to pronounce *ex cathedra* upon matters æsthetic might have been a good omen if it had been more generally and constantly in evidence; even an ignorant interest in art is more promising than apathy. It was likely to be displayed, however, only when a work of art challenged a patriotic or moral conviction. The "Singing Cherubs" which Greenough executed for Cooper were popularly condemned for their nakedness; and the colossal "Washington" that the Congress ordered for the Rotunda of the Capitol met with a storm of indignation and derision because of its classic undress. In case of the "Washington," the first monumental work ever executed by an American sculptor, popular ridicule expressed, however ignorantly, a sounder instinct than that of the artist. Greenough had attempted to apotheosize the national

hero; the idea was false and could have appealed only to a false taste. Moreover, it put too heavy a strain upon the resources of the young sculptor. In choosing to represent Washington in Olympian aspect, he at once essayed the sublime and risked the ridiculous. If he failed of the one, he at least deserves credit for having escaped the other. The seated, half-naked figure, with its upward-pointing right hand and its left extending a reversed sword, is curious, but it is not ridiculous. It has dignity, if not the Jove-like majesty that its author intended. But it has dignity rather in spite of his conception than because of it.

Yet when one turns to the historically treated statues of the Italianates, one is inclined to sigh for the Olympian nudity of this "Washington." Nothing is spared: not the trimming of a garment, the thread which attaches a button, the perforated lace of a frill. The inexorable chisel of the Italian stonecutter has accounted with tactless precision for every non-essential. The work is "finished" with what William Morris Hunt called "the kind of finish that rats give to cheese." Nothing is left to the imagination, except to give to the sculptured conception the life that the sculptor has too often failed to put into it. For the essential weakness of these pseudo-classic works is their want of vitality. They show none of that instinctive feeling for the significant relation of line, plane, and mass, which is the essence of good sculpture. Here are none of those "profound, turning volumes that reveal the architecture of the world." One cannot therefore blame the stonecutters for what was essentially the failure of the sculptors. If these had themselves been capable of a less mechanical approach to the problems of their art, they could not have permitted their works to be fretted and chewed by the chisel of the mechanic.

Yet those of their contemporaries who pretended to an understanding of art found much to approve in the works of the school—the groups and figures, executed according to the prevailing misconception of the classical style, and labeled with such appealing titles as "Nydia," "Cleopatra," "The Lost Pleiad," "The West Wind," "Beatrice Cenci." Hiram Powers, who went to Italy not long after Greenough, gained an international reputation with his "Greek Slave," which inspired no less a poet than Mrs. Browning to impassioned verse; not, it must be said, by virtue of its sculptural quality but because of the emotions aroused by its title. Sculpturally, the figure left something to be desired. Jarves, who seems to have been somewhat less swayed by sentiment than most of his contemporaries, got somewhere near the truth of the matter when he said that "Hiram Powers fully represents the mechanical proclivities of the nation. His female statues are simply tolerably well-modelled figures, borrowed in conception from the second-rate antiques, and somewhat arbitrarily named." Yet in spite of its defects —or perhaps because of them—the statue has more dignity than those meaningless nudes photographed in marble, produced by later sculptors better schooled but not more intelligent. Its public exhibition helped to break down somewhat the general prejudice against the nude in art. The American horror of nudity was mitigated by sympathy with the sad plight of the poor captive. In Cincinnati, a committee of clergymen visited the exhibition to determine "whether or not it should be countenanced by religious people." As Mr. Taft amusingly remarks in his *History of American Sculpture,* the reverend gentlemen joined unanimously in giving her a "character."

The work of Powers was confined to portrait busts

and "ideal" figures. Thomas Crawford merits notice as the first American sculptor to be entrusted with extensive public works. The "Freedom" whose lofty position above the dome of the National Capitol lends it enchantment, is his work, and so is the pedimental group above the Senate wing of the building. When he died he had still in hand a pair of bronze doors for the Senate, as well as the elaborate and inept equestrian statue of Washington which was later put in place at Richmond, Virginia.

It would be wearisome to enumerate the public works of the Italianates. Suffice it to say that they were numerous and pretty generally uninteresting. The first American sculptor to rebel against the Italian tyranny was Henry Kirke Brown, who abandoned the ideal figures of the school after his return from Italy, and made a sojourn among the Indians, where he found inspiration for works more vital than Thorwaldsenian classics. As his reputation grew he received commissions for public works, one of which, his equestrian statue of Washington in Union Square, New York, executed with the assistance of his pupil, J. Q. A. Ward, remains one of the best equestrian statues in the country. This dignified, well-proportioned group, although it was removed in time only two years from Mills's "Jackson," is removed from it in quality by the total distance that separates sculpture from mechanics. The "Jackson" so delighted the America of its day that the Congress added twenty thousand dollars to the twelve thousand stipulated in its contract with the sculptor; an enthusiasm not incomprehensible if one remembers that it was the first American equestrian statue, and that the audacious ingenuity of the conception was calculated to appeal to "the mechanical proclivities of the nation." Today, it

inspires only astonishment and amusement; whereas the "Washington" of Brown demands respect for its nobility of conception and also for a restraint which later modelers of plunging steeds, whose riders are distinguished for nothing save expert horsemanship, might have done well to emulate.

While the Italianates were sending home elaborately finished groups and portrait busts, while Henry Kirke Brown was demonstrating a healthy impulse toward independence of the Italian influence, and Clark Mills was making a reputation not only as a sculptor but as the first American professional founder of statuary, the most talented American sculptor of the period was struggling against adversity in an environment which offered almost nothing in the way either of knowledge or of inspiration. The frustration which characterized the artistic career of William Rimmer was in part temperamental. He was the son of a Frenchman said to have been of noble or royal birth, whose name is not known, but who passed on to his son his bitter sense of wrong at having been deprived of his titles and estates; so that at seventeen the youth already felt himself "a wronged and saddened man." The father, a man of talent and culture, was able, however, to give his children much besides a sense of the world's injustice. The family lived apart in a little world of its own, a world of art, literature, and music. This kind of life no doubt strengthened young Rimmer's natural disposition to shrink from contact with people, and his intolerance of the spiritual poverty of his environment. His artistic gift developed early; at fifteen he executed in gypsum a seated figure entitled "Despair," which evidences far more of sculptural feeling than the conventional ideal figures then currently accepted as the last word in art.

Indeed, all of the work of this artist is as foreign to the spirit of his time as his life was barren of contacts with fellow-artists. Culturally and socially he was a misfit; and his sense of the difference between himself and those about him increased his spiritual isolation. It may also be the reason why he attached little importance to his work. His mind found its natural expression in graphic and plastic conceptions; he produced constantly; but his drawings, made on any paper he happened to find at hand, were preserved only when some member of his family took sufficient interest to save them, and of his sculptures only a few escaped the destruction that comes through neglect. With painting he did little, and his color, according to his biographer, was far inferior to his form. Yet he loved color, and used to say to his daughter, "My dear, some day we will revel in paint." Those of his paintings which I have seen in photographs bear, like everything else he did, the imprint of a natural genius for plastic expression. Enough of his works remain, indeed, to attest not only a remarkable ability but a truly creative imagination and a knowledge which contrasts strangely with the ignorance of men who had incomparably better opportunities.

His life was a long struggle against poverty, first as a painter, later as a physician in a small New England village, and at last as a teacher of anatomy, after artists and art-lovers, recognizing his remarkable ability, persuaded him to remove to Boston and deliver lectures on the subject to students of art. Only once did he have an opportunity to do a public monument; and the result, the "Hamilton" that stands in Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, is strangely inadequate as the work of a man so genuinely gifted. Not that it is worse than the statues that more popular sculptors were producing; it

is better; but it is not remarkably better, as it should have been. His failure with it can perhaps be attributed to his lack of the self-discipline and self-criticism that come from participation in a vital art-spirit. With characteristic impetuosity he executed the clay model, between eight and nine feet high, in eleven days. He was curiously uncritical of the result, and indifferent to the public disappointment that followed the erection of the completed statue, although he was ambitious to do public works, and the general dissatisfaction meant that he had no further opportunity. Probably this indifference resulted from his realization that there was no place for him in American life as a creative artist, as indeed there was not. He was much too strong for the artistic ignorance and timidity of his time, and for its priggish sentimentality.

He should have lived in the time of the Renaissance or the country of Delacroix. Some of his drawings have a rush and sweep of line that remind one of Delacroix or of Rubens; and he had an instinctive feeling for rhythmic composition. Other drawings, such as "The Fall of Night," in which a gigantic winged figure hovers over a darkening landscape, show an imaginative quality reminiscent of William Blake. Still others, such as his "Nine Days They Fell," were evidently inspired by Michelangelo, and show the overmodeling to which that great genius was addicted in his later years. One wonders what Rimmer might have achieved had his country in his time offered wider scope for his gifts than the teaching of anatomy and the publication of books on the subject. But given his peculiar nature, in a harsh and unsympathetic environment, his life could not be other than disappointing to himself or his work

other than disappointing to those who realized how totally incommensurate it was with his remarkable gifts.

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The lack of that spirit of emulation and self-criticism which develops the artist in an environment where the art-spirit is strongly alive, no doubt accounts largely for the incompleteness of a painter whose life was in striking contrast with Rimmer's. When William Morris Hunt returned to America in 1855, he had enjoyed every cultural advantage that money and an assured social position could provide. In Paris, whither he went to study after having rejected the teaching of Düsseldorf, he was a favorite pupil for some five years in the studio of Couture, and his work shows that able painter's influence, both in draughtsmanship and in its warmth of color. But after a time he discovered the Barbizon group and deserted the atelier Couture to consort with these painters who were still beyond the pale of artistic respectability. He became a close friend of Millet, whose influence is evident in his work, not only in his treatment of certain subjects, but in his choice of them—subjects such as "The Belated Kid," and "Sheep Shearing at Barbizon." The influence of the Barbizon school is also evident in his treatment of landscape not as a number of forms and colors to be exactly noted, but as a mood to be expressed. "When you paint what you see," he said, "you paint an object. When you paint what you feel, you paint a poem." He, with Inness, introduced the romanticism of the Barbizon painters into American art.

Some of his pictures are indeed poems. None is more intimately felt or more poetically expressed than "The Bathers," in the Worcester Museum. The cool green of the shaded bank, the shimmer of the water, the nude

form of the young boy beautifully sculptured in light and shadow against the gloom of the background; all are rendered with a poetic feeling which makes this one of his most wholly satisfying works. He painted some good landscapes, among which "Gloucester Harbor" is the best. He could also paint objectively; his portraits show a power to observe keenly and to record quite literally what he saw. Yet the quality of his painting and his ability to render not only the features but the character of his sitters, saved them from the photographic dullness of such painters as Huntington and Healy. The only portrait painter of the 'sixties and 'seventies who can be compared with him in this respect is Eastman Johnson, whose work is in other ways quite different from Hunt's, as might be expected in a painter whose training was acquired at Düsseldorf and the Hague.

But Hunt's work, delightful though it is, has not the even excellence which it might have developed had he spent his mature years in an environment where knowledge of art was more generally current and where he might have enjoyed the advantage of criticism from men working in the same spirit as himself, and constant comparison of his work with theirs. He missed, in America, the congenial associations that he had known in France; and his creative powers were cramped by the indifference of his compatriots to his art. His subjects were neither "ideal" enough to suit American taste, nor had his pictures enough sentimentality, though they were full of sentiment. He wanted to paint historical works and genre; but he soon found that he should starve at it. Not until he took up portrait painting did his compatriots find his work acceptable. If he had come a little later, he might have helped to save mural

painting from the bathos in which it has contentedly weltered; but his fine, ill-fated decorations in the Capitol at Albany, the second important work of the kind to be done in this country, were painted only a year before his premature and tragic death. Lacking sympathy and opportunity, he was obliged to content himself with teaching, painting portraits, and experimenting in style and color. He once said of himself, "In another country I should have been a painter." He was a painter, and a good one; but he was always the experimenter too, the seeker who never quite attained to that complete individuality which characterizes the mature artist. And for this he felt, no doubt rightly, that his time and his environment were responsible.

Yet Hunt was able to render great service to American art not only through the excellence of his work, but through his influence on collectors and on his pupils, one of whom was John La Farge, who began to study with him soon after Hunt's return from Europe. The advantage of close contact with a man so gifted and cultivated must have seemed a rare privilege to students of art. His comments on art, taken down and afterward published by one of them, are full of sound instruction, and sometimes of prophetic wisdom: "There's going to be painting that's perfectly simple—the simple expression of simple forms. To do this a man must be tremendously strong." To Hunt, more, perhaps than to any other one man, was due the profound influence exerted by French art upon American artists in the late nineteenth century. The leaven was already at work in the 'seventies, when the works of the Barbizon group, and especially of Corot, were dividing the painters into two opposing camps, much as those

of the Post-Impressionists and Cubists divided them forty years later.

The sculptors of the third quarter of the century found their chief strength in repudiating the Italian influence. Not that the influx of Italianate sculptures did not continue. A large colony of American sculptors, in Rome and Florence, continued to supply the demand for bric-a-brac in sculptured form; and a few of them, like Randolph Rogers, William Wetmore Story, and Harriet Hosmer, gained wide reputation at home and abroad. Another late arrival among the American colony in Rome was William H. Rinehart, whose work, although he clung to the classic themes of the school, was better modeled and less mechanical in finish than that of the other Italianates. It is not in the works of the later Italianates, however, that one traces the progress of American sculpture, but rather in those of such men as J. Q. A. Ward, Erastus Palmer, and Thomas Ball. Ward, like Brown before him, was attracted to Indian themes. While in Brown's studio he conceived his statue of "The Indian Hunter" which stands in Central Park, tense, alert, and realistic—a far cry from the precious conceits of the Italianates, even though the dog that accompanies the figure hints of their artificial and lifeless handling. American sculpture was growing contemporaneous, even national, in spirit. The tendency is evident not only in the title but in the treatment of "The White Captive" modeled by Palmer not long after failing eyesight had forced him to abandon his profession of carver of cameo portraits and undertake larger works. There is nothing in this figure to remind one of the Italian school—neither puerility nor any mechanical quality in the execution. It is simply a rather realistic representation of an immature young girl, well posed, and modeled and chis-

eled with considerable feeling for form and for the quality of the material. Thomas Ball is best known for his famous "Emancipation Group" in Washington. His equestrian "Washington," in Boston, though not as fine as Brown's, still ranks well among American equestrian statues.

The Civil War gave an added impetus to the native bent of sculpture. The new sense of national solidarity created by the preservation of the Union stimulated the demand for monuments to the nation's famous men and its soldier dead. And by that time American sculptors were able to meet this demand with works which if not often distinguished were at least not niggling. They had learned how to construct figures anatomically if not æsthetically; how to put bodies inside the awkward raiment of their statues; how to give a semblance of life to their monumental works. At their worst the public monuments of the period are wretched indeed; at their best they are dignified if not inspiring.

Linked in its intention with the genre painters of the period rather than with the sculptors, was the work of John Rogers, who produced small groups and statuettes illustrating scenes from civil and military life; groups such as "The Slave Auction," "The Emancipation Proclamation," "One More Shot," which, appealing at once to the sympathies of the public and its love of the familiar, enjoyed immediate popularity. A representative collection of these groups is in the galleries of the New York Historical Society. Handled solely with a view to their story-telling effect, they show no attempt at rhythmical composition; and the literal-minded sculptor often introduced accessories extremely difficult of sculptural treatment, such as church pews or a counter laden with goods. But the individual figures have a

good deal of vitality. They do not pose; they do not pretend. They tell the story simply and directly. If they are sometimes a little grotesque, these groups have an earnest sincerity which made them, certainly, a healthier artistic diet than affected and sentimental creations in the Italian taste.

What Rogers did in sculpture, Eastman Johnson, Winslow Homer, and less important men, among whom may be mentioned John F. Weir, were doing in painting. Johnson painted a number of scenes from the life of the time, such as "The Corn Husking" and "The New Bonnet," now in the Metropolitan Museum, and his famous "Old Kentucky Home," in the New York Public Library. Most of Johnson's work in genre shows the influence of Düsseldorf in its sober color and carefully minute finish; but not all. "The Corn Husking" is more broadly handled. An even greater variety of treatment is in his portraits, which are now finished to the last detail, and again painted quite broadly and directly, with free, loose brushwork. His portraits, which are sometimes powerful, are his best work, although his genre was excellent for its time, and has a charm which is rarely met with among the followers of the Düsseldorf tradition.

As for Homer's early genre, although it is unimportant as compared with his later work, his distinguishing characteristics are in it: the humor, the exact observation, the presentation of the scene just as it appeared to him, with no wearisome straining after a heightened pictorial effect. Isham well says that in Johnson's work one recognizes the scene precisely as one would have imagined it, whereas in Homer's one realizes that thus and not otherwise it must actually have been. He painted what he saw, and the significance of the picture is in

Courtesy of Mrs. Eakins

EAKINS. William Rush Carving the Allegorical Figure of the Schuylkill River

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

EAKINS. Signora Gomez d'Arza

the strength of his representation, his economy of means, his grasp of character and the essence of situations.

American art, by the time of the Centennial Exposition, was as it were in a state of preparation for the remarkable burst of activity that came in the last quarter of the century. Its re-orientation toward Continental schools had been accomplished and was beginning to bear fruit. Hunt, La Farge, and others among the painters had found instruction and inspiration in Paris, Elihu Vedder in Italy. The sculptors also had discovered the French school, and two of the most talented of the younger men, Olin Levi Warner and Augustus Saint-Gaudens, had already returned from their Parisian studies. The new school of Munich, which represented, however mistakenly, a revolt against the false classicism of the followers of David and Ingres, attracted many American students in the 'sixties and 'seventies, two of whom, Frank Duveneck and William M. Chase, exercised a considerable influence on American painting after their return. While all these new influences were at work, the earlier men—Bristol, Cropsey, McEntee, Church, and others—continued the manner of their school, indifferent or inimical to the changes that were going on around them. But American landscape painting was developing along other lines in the work of Inness, Martin, and Wyant, artists whose most important work belongs to the years after the Centennial. The difference between the aims and ideals of the younger men, vague and incomplete though these often were, and those of the earlier group, who dominated the National Academy, inevitably brought about a break which was signalized, the year after the Centennial, in the foundation of the Society of American Artists by a group of more progressive academicians and young outsiders—the begin-

ning of the rift which has steadily widened and deepened between the timorous conservatism of the school and the radicalism, so-called, of men who are not afraid to risk failure in testing and judging for themselves the validity of new ideas.

SECTION III

RECOMMENCEMENTS

The Revival of Art

Era of Confusion

Archæology *vs.* Art

Modern Painters and Sculptors

Chapter Six

The Revival of Art

THE break between the school and the independents in America was not, as in France, a break between those who sought to preserve the letter of a great tradition and those who continued its spirit. The members of the Academy did not share even a misconception of a great tradition, for America had none; their one common possession was ignorance. Nor could they see any reason to be dissatisfied with that. Their work had won them prestige and financial success. For years they had enjoyed the confidence of wealthy men and of the public. Indeed, if merit were gauged by financial rewards, it would be necessary to concede that the best American art was that of the third quarter of the century. The results of unbridled opportunism in the exploitation of the country's resources were beginning to be apparent in the swollen fortunes which marked the closing period of the century. The Civil War, to be sure, impoverished the South, but at the same time it offered Northern profiteers excellent opportunities for large-scale theft and thus helped to increase the numbers of the "idle rich." This wealthy class, fired with the innate human passion for conspicuous waste, spent their money as wealthy classes have always spent it: they surrounded themselves with every luxury that

money could buy; they entertained one another lavishly; they gave to charity and patronized art. If they did all these things rather crudely, it was only to be expected; they had not the experience of privilege that fosters good taste among a long-established aristocracy.

They bought the silly marbles of the Italianates, and they patronized the American painters. Never have the works of living American artists commanded such prices. Bierstadt sold his elephantine landscapes for as much as thirty-five thousand dollars. Those of Church also brought amounts which seem fantastic today; and the less pretentious canvases of other landscape painters sold for proportionate sums. The popular portrait painters had as many sitters as they had time for; and as for the genre painters, the importance of their market may be gauged by the large number of such works in the collections that have been preserved intact from that period. Nor were the rich the only patrons of American art. There was some official patronage from towns, cities, and states. The national government employed American sculptors to decorate government buildings and commemorate public men. It employed painters to depict historical personages or events, or to cover vast canvases with transcripts from American scenery. Bierstadt, Leutze, and others sold pictures to the government; and Leutze painted over a stairway of the Capitol the first genuine mural in America of any pretensions to importance, "The Star of Empire." The Congress, in spite of its preoccupation with such absorbing concerns as civil war and peaceable spoliation of the country's resources, still found time to acquire a national collection of art important enough to be noted as a national disgrace by a writer at the time of the Centennial.

The Academicians were therefore well satisfied with

their position. "The passionate call of mediocrity to mediocrity" had met with encouraging response. The work they did was their honest best, and appealed to buyers as honest and ignorant as themselves. A few of their number realized that it was trivial and incompetent, and these—men such as R. Swain Gifford, Inness, Martin, and La Farge—threw in their lot with the rebels. These, for their part, could put forward no such claims to leadership as Courbet or Manet, or any of those French independents whose names are now famous while those of their academic detractors are forgotten. The American dissentients were, most of them, not much beyond the student stage; but they had gained from their contact with the art and artists of Europe a larger knowledge of art and a deeper understanding of it than was general among American artists. They had felt the various influences in the ferment that was seething in France, where during the nineteenth century new movements of epochal importance proceeded either simultaneously or in bewilderingly rapid succession. They had followed the narrow classicism of the school, dominated, unfortunately, by "Monsieur Ingres" the classicist, "in awe of the purity of the masters and keeping an iron restraint on the hand of the painter," rather than by the Ingres who had himself rebelled against the school's corruption of David's teaching, and who was at his greatest when the painter in him threw off the restraint of the classicist. Or they had been inspired by the Romanticists; by the later Corot, by Millet, and the others of that Barbizon group whose lesser men degenerated into sentimentality through their failure to realize, as Delacroix, the great leader of the Romanticists, had realized, that classical structure must underlie romantic sentiment if art is to be vital. Few American students seem to have received directly the inspiration of the great-

est painter of the century. La Farge acknowledged indebtedness to him; but most of them seem to have received his influence indirectly—through the landscape painters just mentioned, through the teaching of Couture, and the researches in color of the Impressionists. Perhaps Delacroix was too much the eagle, to use Corot's descriptive term; perhaps he soared too high for them to follow.

Or the American students, especially Whistler, came under the influence of Courbet, who, in his reaction against the romantic movement, declared that it is the painter's business to paint what he sees, forgetting that the significance of his work is determined by the quality of his vision, and producing, out of the intensity of his own vision, work so strong that Cézanne could say of its influence, "It took me forty years to realize that painting is not sculpture." This influence was felt not only by the American students in Paris, but by those who studied in Munich, where Leibl and Dietz added to their intense study of the Dutch masters an equally intense study of nature, inspired largely by the work of the great French realist. Later the American painters in Paris came into contact with the Impressionists, who, adding to the sentiment of the Romanticists the realism of Courbet and that analysis of light which had been made possible by Delacroix's discoveries in the field of color, produced those high-keyed, shimmering canvases which embody the ultimate modern development in the representation of appearances.

All these tendencies, apparently conflicting and yet all aspects of one great living tradition, were reflected in the exhibitions of the Society of American Artists. If the American public was slow to understand the innovators, it was little slower than the French public; and if

the artists found more publicity than purchasers for their works, they were not, in this respect, much worse off than their foreign contemporaries. But there were other reasons for the failure of American artists to find a market for their works than the novelty of the tendencies these represented; reasons which lay in the rediscovery of Europe that marked the close of the nineteenth century. The period was notable for a decided return of American culture to its European sources, a return of which the reflection of foreign tendencies in American art was only one aspect. The movement had already begun in the decade that followed the Civil War. If the increasing ease of transportation brought Europeans in millions to seek prosperity in the New World, it took Americans in thousands to seek knowledge or enjoyment in the Old. In this period, the society of wealth and power became international; and in this period began that yearly exodus to Europe of American artists, scientists, students, schoolteachers, and prosperous middle-class families that has continued in growing volume (save for the war period) down to the present day.

The change profoundly affected American art. The American millionaire, having turned his acquisitive instinct to good account in the amassing of wealth, now set about exercising it, by means of his wealth, in the direction of culture. He might not import the culture of Europe, but he could import its tangible products, and he did. He employed American architects to reproduce the castles or palaces of the Old World; and he filled the rooms of his Norman or Gothic castle, his French or Italian palace with ancient tapestries, embroidered velvets, mediæval armor, old furniture, and masterpieces of painting and sculpture. Where J. J. Jarves, returning from Italy in the 'sixties with a fine collection of Italian

primitives, had been unable to sell them to American buyers, enterprising dealers now ransacked Italy for old masterpieces to sell in the American market, and exported them in such numbers that the Italian government, in alarm, at last prohibited the removal of old works of art from Italy. In other countries it was the same. Never, probably, in the world's history has looting proceeded on such a grand scale and by such peaceful means. There are Americans who regret it; who liken it to the wholesale Roman importation of Greek art, and who predict that as the Roman creative genius was cramped by spiritual slavery to Greece, so the American genius will be cramped by a similar slavery to Europe. One might share this view if the analogy were exact; but it is not. The Romans were not Greeks, and therefore were importing a culture alien to their own spirit. Americans, on the other hand, are Europeans, only a few generations removed from European soil and retaining many European customs and traditions. In importing the art of Europe, therefore, they are in a sense importing their own past, the past upon which they, like Europeans, must build the future. Cultivated Europeans may with reason resent the irresistible attraction of American wealth which has drawn so many treasures of European art across the Atlantic; but Americans have reason to be thankful that the great collections which are constantly being made accessible to the public are here for their education and enjoyment. Whatever may have been the motive that actuated such collectors as Mr. Morgan, Mr. Altman, and Mrs. Gardner, to mention only three, it cannot be denied that their collections have greatly enriched American cultural resources.

But if this new discovery of Europe was of ultimate advantage to American art, it constituted an immediate

hardship for American artists, for it deprived them of that which has always been the artist's chief reliance: the patronage of the wealthy. So furiously raged the fever for European art that even buyers of contemporary works were likely to prefer the foreign to the American product. There was reason for this preference in so far as it applied to the works of the modern French masters; but it applied a good deal more often to the works of a Gérôme or a Bouguereau than to those of a Monet or a Degas. Many excellent French works found American purchasers during the period. The canvases of Corot—the late Corot of "cottony trees and misty ponds"—and those of Millet rose to fantastic prices, and so did those even of the lesser Barbizon painters. The works of the greatest modern sculptor, Barye, found American admirers and purchasers, and I have already spoken of the purchase by an American collector of Manet's "Woman with a Parrot" and "Boy with a Sword," which were presented to the Metropolitan Museum of Art as early as 1889. But American taste was uncertain, and if it came to choosing between a good American picture and a less good French one, was likely to prefer the latter. Gérôme and Bouguereau and their like dominated the market for contemporary works. There was reason for this, indeed. The better American painters were not painting sentimental genre, and the work of the Frenchmen was infinitely better done than that of the American painters who were. Still, it must be recorded that although some better American painters were painting portraits, the visiting European portrait painter, whose facility seemed to be considered an adequate substitute for qualities more æsthetically desirable, attained in this period the fashionable vogue he has since continued to enjoy.

American artists might have dispensed with the sup-

port of the wealthy had there been any considerable patronage of art among people of moderate means, such as there is among people of that class in France. But the American picture-buying public had never been a large one; and although the echoes in America of the artistic movements which were agitating Europe stimulated a more general interest in art which resulted in the foundation of many art schools and societies of artists, this interest rarely went so far as to lead to any practical connoisseurship. Americans of moderate means who could afford it traveled in Europe, and dutifully "did" the European galleries; but when it came to buying pictures and sculptures, they usually contented themselves with the photographs of famous masterpieces which became available during the period. The great majority who remained at home found sufficient expression for their æsthetic interests in reading about art, and seeing it only in the engravings (and later the photographic reproductions) that accompanied the texts of books and magazine articles. So general indeed was the tendency to enjoy works of art at second hand that La Farge, in 1886, could speak about "great decorative paintings which are carried out so that they may be photographed without any injury to their color, nay to its vast improvement," and remark that "For us today, things and realities no longer exist; it is in their descriptions that we believe."

American artists, therefore, found it difficult to dispose of their work. They could write about art for the magazines; they could teach it in the art schools; but they could not produce it with any certainty of finding buyers. Not that American works never sold; but American artists could no longer count on living by their art, more especially if its qualities were not readily comprehensible.

There were "dealers' delights" (to borrow a phrase from Mr. Hassam) in America as there were abroad; men who produced "the colored photograph kind of painting—made by the yard and sold by the score"; men who in a happier time would have been good craftsmen, turning their dexterity to the production of the furniture, pottery, and metal work that constituted popular art before the industrial age turned potentially excellent craftsmen into poor painters and sculptors. It is unfortunately true that any one can learn to paint; any one can learn to model; but few there are who could make any very satisfactory answer to the question Millet put to William Morris Hunt when he saw what that painter had learned in the studio of Couture: "What have you to say with it?" Those Americans who had most to say were likely to wait long before being heard, and the need to divide their energies between their real work and the work by which they got their living, made their artistic development slower and less complete than that of their French contemporaries.

For the sculptor, of course, there was always the possibility of commissions for public works, or for memorials, fountains, or portrait busts for private patrons. Saint-Gaudens, French, MacMonnies, Taft, Barnard, and others among the more successful sculptors of the period, all received important commissions; and so did both J. Q. A. Ward and Thomas Ball, who continued actively at work until after the turn of the century. In the important field of sculpture as an adjunct to architecture, on the other hand, the American sculptor had less opportunity. The tendency among architects, a tendency which continues at present—although the modern movement promises to correct it—was to regard sculpture as ornament rather than as art, and to employ the services of skilled Italian

modelers, who worked for wages and executed with a certain craftsmanlike proficiency designs which could be borrowed easily and at no expense from the sculptors of the past.

A few painters found a fairly steady market for their works, among them such able men as Winslow Homer and Albert P. Ryder. But it was no longer possible for the young painter to live by his brush from the beginning of his career, as it had been a generation earlier. The time was past when, if all else failed, he could take colors and canvases under his arm and set forth to make his living as an itinerant portrait painter. So the "younger men" of the 'seventies and 'eighties were obliged to live by avocations—writing, teaching, illustrating, or other pursuits. It was the want of demand for his canvases that first caused La Farge to turn his attention to the possibilities of stained glass; and had not circumstances drawn him into the field of mural painting, he might have found himself forced to be more the craftsman than the painter. Eakins, Chase, Duveneck, Twachtman, became teachers; Shirlaw, Hassam, and others did occasional illustration. La Farge also included some illustration in the wide range of his activities. Later on, the "younger men" of the early twentieth century solved the same problem in much the same way. Robert Henri has taught a surprisingly large number of the younger painters who are making names for themselves today. William Glackens and John Sloan have made important contributions to American illustration. Boardman Robinson is not only illustrator as well as painter, but he is also one of the most distinguished cartoonists the country has produced. One would say that the public indifference which forced all these men to live only indirectly or partly by their art, would have had a discouraging effect on

artistic activity. But it must be remembered that interest in art—if not in American art—was more general and enlightened than in earlier periods, and that the artists had the strength of the European movement to sustain them. They knew the value of their contact with European art and artists; they knew that art can recognize no boundary lines, that peoples grow through contact with one another; and they steadily resisted all efforts to prohibit or curtail, through the tariff, the importation of European art.

Not all those who went abroad to study returned to struggle. Europe has always exerted upon American artists the fascination of a rich culture for the sensitive mind; and since West first settled in London there have been American expatriates working in Europe, and either identifying themselves with the countries in which they lived or sending their works home to be exhibited and sold, and themselves returning now and then. The early sculptors who went to Italy settled there, almost without exception, and of our later sculptors several have lived as much abroad as at home. Among the earlier painters three or four settled permanently in England, became well known there, and produced works indistinguishable in feeling from those of other English nineteenth-century painters. When Düsseldorf was drawing students from the New World, these now and then settled in Germany and produced works characteristic of the school; and later, when American students were getting their training in French schools and studios, the charm of Paris held many of them after their student days were over. Even England retained its attraction for American artists. Whistler, whose art and temperament were as little English as possible, elected to live there. Although E. A. Abbey's murals were done for America,

they are English in feeling, and his illustration is as English as the old village of Broadway where for a time he lived. J. J. Shannon, a later expatriate, was a member of the Royal Academy and counted among the foremost English painters—which is unfortunately not high praise.

There is a strong tendency in the United States at present to deprecate the foreign influence and the fascination of foreign life for the American artist; to maintain that if American art is to be truly American it must develop on American soil. This prescription seems a bit drastic. The important thing is that art shall draw on the richest available sources. If another country offers richer sources than one's own, then perhaps the best way to contribute to the art of one's country is to draw upon them, even if it necessitates expatriation—as Claude and Poussin drew on Italian sources during the seventeenth century, and by their expatriation redeemed French art from a temporary aridity. It is not nearly so important that an art shall be national as that it shall be good; the question, therefore, in regard to the expatriate is not, would his work be more American if it were done elsewhere, but would it be better work?

One feels, for example, that Vedder's work would have been better if he had found his inspiration in France instead of Italy. He developed great facility from his study of classical and Renaissance art; rather too much, indeed, if it be more important to find the significant way of saying a thing than to find the easy or clever way. He models strongly, but his modeling is dry and lifeless. Throughout his work one feels the want of contact with a living tradition of art: both in the matter and the manner of it there is a certain unreality, as if it were rather an acquirement than a growth. His earlier paintings are his best; those of the 'sixties, done before

Courtesy of the Rhode Island School of Design

WYANT. Landscape

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

MARTIN. Manor House at Criquebœuf

his desire "to give to the unreal and impossible an air of plausibility," had become stronger than his desire to paint good pictures. His later work carries little artistic conviction: those figures and heads enveloped in swirling draperies tortured into extravagant arabesques among which his line wanders inanely. The heads—the "Lazarus," the "Samson," the "Delilah"—represent an effort to produce a big effect by a means analogous to the "close-up" of the motion picture instead of the more difficult means of a large conception and adequate realization.

His love of the unreal and the symbolic found more appropriate expression in his celebrated illustrations for the *Rubáiyát*. The symbol in art is essentially literary, appealing to associations rather than to love of form and color. In a sense, introducing it is like carrying coals to Newcastle; for art is itself essentially symbolic. Associative symbolism is an æsthetic dead weight, which can be carried only by an art whose sign-making value is in itself so great that the *introduced* symbol becomes unimportant in relation to it; or by an art whose primary intention is literary, such as the art of illustration. In Vedder's graphic comment on Omar, the hour-glasses, the skulls, the chains and burnt-out lamps find appropriate place; and his swirling lines serve a frankly decorative purpose, although one may sometimes question how successfully. Here, too, the symbolic figures he loved to draw fall into a valid place. The illustrations form an ingenious, dignified, and sometimes beautiful commentary on the text. His work in murals, of which I shall speak later, leaves more to be desired.

If Vedder did badly to live in Italy, James McNeill Whistler did little better to live in England; and had it not been for his years of study in Paris and his close

contact with French artists, his work must have suffered more from his environment than Vedder's did. The art of Victorian England was literary, sentimental, and dull, and the pall of bourgeois prudery weighed heavily upon it. Apropos of this prudery, there is an amusing story of how Whistler, after an academician by the name of Horsley had expatiated in a public lecture on the indecency of the nude in art, sent to an exhibition three little drawings of nude figures, and under them the legend *"Horsley soit qui mal y pense."* It was the time of Alma-Tadema and Fildes, of Watts, Burne-Jones, and Rossetti. It was also the time of Ruskin, whose dogmatic misinterpretation of art was accepted as gospel by artists and public. The academicians, on the one hand were producing pictures in which subject was considered so important that the artist, as Whistler discovered to his amusement, actually closed his studio to visitors while painting his picture for exhibition at the Academy show, lest some one steal his story. On the other hand, the pre-Raphaelites were combining transcription from nature as literal as that of the Hudson River school with an attempt to recapture the ingenuousness of early Italian art. Neither group was capable of any deep artistic sincerity, because neither had any just idea of what art is. It was not their fault: it is not in the English temperament to express itself graphically; its natural expression is literary. There was more than mere wit in Whistler's suggestion that Rossetti frame, instead of a picture he had painted, the sonnet he had written about it.

Into this Philistia, where the critic was more philistine than the artist and the public more philistine than either, came Whistler, first as an occasional visitor, later as resident; and before long was at open war with it. This was inevitable, given his peculiar temperament and his

point of view. In Paris, although he had studied with Gleyre, Courbet's bitter enemy, he had won Courbet's interest and friendship and had felt his influence—an influence which he later bewailed in a letter to Fantin La Tour, saying he wished he had studied with Ingres. He was a close friend of La Tour, and knew the Impressionists. His "White Girl," execrated by the English critics, had occupied a prominent place in the famous *Salon des Refusés* of 1863, along with Manet's *"Déjeuner sur l' herbe"* and pictures by La Tour, Monet, Jongkind, and other excellent French artists. He was, that is to say, one of the "moderns" of his time. He was thoroughly convinced that art is its own justification, needing no story or moral to furnish its *raison d'être;* he loved a good fight; and he was one of the wittiest men that ever lived. No wonder he became anathema to the English critics and academicians. His view of art, shared by a large and influential group in France, was as unique in England as his picturesque and unconventionally attired person. The critics disliked his work because it was neither literary in subject nor finished with the monotonous thoroughness to which they were accustomed; and they hated the man because he exposed their stupidity so neatly and so mercilessly. The highly entertaining record of his clashes with them, in *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies,* leaves the impression that the artist had the right of it much oftener than his detractors, and that it was hardly worth while to take issue with so much ignorance.

But if he found detractors in England, he also found admirers and purchasers. With all his readiness in dispute, he was a man of fascinating personality, and of gentle and courteous manners. He did not always keep his friends, but he enjoyed the friendship of wealthy and

distinguished people, who liked him for his charm and his wit, and some of them for his art. In addition to the friendship and patronage of distinguished people, and the notoriety he coveted, he found also, in the fog-and-mist-hung Thames, a favorite subject for his paintings and etchings. Here he etched his Thames series, which are perhaps the most wholly satisfying of his plates; and here he found the somber harmonies of night and fog, turning the ugly smokestacks into campanili, that inspired the famous "nocturnes"—or rather furnished subjects: the inspiration came from the "Falling Rocket" of Hiroshige.

His practice of calling his pictures "arrangements," "symphonies," "harmonies," and "nocturnes" irritated his critics even more perhaps than his failure to provide literary interest and mechanical finish. There is evidence that he did it with malice aforethought. The word "symphony" was first suggested by a criticism of Baudelaire; the word "nocturne" by an English friend to whom he wrote his thanks, saying it would anger his critics. Yet these words expressed his intention very well. His vision was objective; he found his subjects in the actual world rather than in the world of the mind. But he arranged the objects in his compositions with the most careful regard for space- and color-relations. Every artist, of course, does this in greater or less degree, but Whistler advertised it. In his own explanatory notes on his pictures in an exhibition, he described them as "the complete results of harmonies obtained by employing the infinite tones and variations of a limited number of colors." This implies great subtlety of perception; and it was perhaps the very subtlety of his perception that gave his work a fragile quality. One would judge from his painting that he had more feeling for line than for volume; more for atmosphere than for the shapes that

move in it. His figures, especially in his later pictures, often have a paper-doll effect. This is rather pleasing in the nocturnes, and the etchings and lithographs, where the little figures are incidental and where he has most nearly succeeded in attaining the two-dimensional representation of the Japanese prints that so profoundly influenced him. But in those paintings where the figure is all-important, his hesitation between Western three-dimensional and Japanese two-dimensional drawing results in a failure to achieve either with satisfying completeness. It is hardly necessary to remark that if he had had a robust sense of three-dimensional form, his art could never have fallen thus between two stools.

For an artist whose weakness lay in his realization of form, England was the worst possible place to live, since this is the outstanding weakness of English art. It is not surprising, therefore, that his early work, both in painting and etching, is his best; the work done while he was still in close contact with his French colleagues. His masterpiece, "The Little White Girl," was painted in 1864, a picture which although it was duly labeled "Symphony in White," carries no hint of self-consciousness. The model is beautifully posed and drawn, and her reflection in the mirror gives to the composition an unstudied effectiveness as fine as that of the reflection in Ingres's portrait of Mme. d'Haussonville. In the later portraits of his mother and Thomas Carlyle, still fine, the tendency toward two-dimensional drawing is already evident, as well as that toward a too-studied arrangement. In the "nocturnes," form is almost entirely lost in fog and darkness. Some of them, indeed, are little else than combinations of color; the "Falling Rocket," for example, which moved Ruskin (forgetting that his idol Turner had done much the same kind of thing) to remark

wrathfully that he had never before heard of a coxcomb asking two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face. His etching, too, deteriorated. His technical mastery of the medium is indisputable. The change appears in what he said with it. He said much in the French series, in simple forms beautifully combined. The Thames series, which followed, with its glimpses of life along the London waterfront—its docks and shops, its busy folk, its fine patterns of masts and rigging—deserved the warm praise that Baudelaire gave it. He had a remarkable ability to render, in black and white, effects of atmosphere and contrasts of light and shadow. In these respects, indeed, his etchings and lithographs are finer than his work in oil. But his later etchings are often wanting in seriousness. There is too much deliberate display of virtuosity, too much substitution of hint for statement. The same thing is true of his lithographs, although for some reason these are less often tenuous.

In every medium, then, one perceives a progressive deterioration of quality. This was due first, perhaps, to the savage opposition that drove him to extravagances from which the criticism of intelligent co-workers might have saved him; and secondly to the fulsome adulation of his followers during his later years, after his long battle for recognition had been won. "He behaves," said Degas, "as if he had no talent." The criticism was just and penetrating. A man fully conscious of his own power can afford to be equally indifferent to praise and blame. Indeed it takes great strength to remain unspoiled by either, although of the two, perhaps, extravagant praise, especially if it be undiscriminating, is the greater menace to integrity. When one is surrounded, as Whistler was toward the close of his career, by wor-

shipers who insist that the slightest touch of his pencil is supremely important, he is likely to come to believe it himself, and to turn out his slightest touches as adequate works of art. And so, in Whistler's later work, virtuosity is too often substituted for graphic meaning. His painting became more mannered, and more irresolute in its "flights from Velasquez to the Japanese"; his etchings and lithographs were often mere suggestions of pictures. It was the logical result of his temperament and environment; but while one may lament it, one may not allow it to obscure the value of his work. If, in general, he lacks force and carrying power, he produced a few paintings which deserve to rank high in the art of his time. He played a significant part in the nineteenth-century revival of etching; and he helped to reclaim the art of lithography from the hands of the commercial lithographers. With all his limitations, he was a unique and important figure in the world of art.

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While Whistler in London was battling the accredited representatives of English philistinism, and Vedder in Italy was serenely eddied apart from the swift current of modern development, American artists in America were producing work which entitles their period to be rated as the most significant thus far in the art of their country. For to this period belongs the work of those two artists who, with Copley, make up the trio of America's most important painters: Thomas Eakins and Albert P. Ryder; and to this period belongs also the most important work of Winslow Homer, one of the most original and powerful talents in the annals of American art. To it also belongs the important work of John La Farge, distinguished as painter, mural decorator, maker

of stained glass and writer and lecturer on art; a learned, cultivated, and urbane gentleman, a man of complex and fascinating personality. The early landscape school culminated and declined during the period. The Impressionist movement furnished inspiration for several excellent American painters; and Impressionism enabled Maurice Prendergast to develop an art which can hang beside the French masters without losing any of its freshness and strength by the comparison. If sculpture did not attain the same heights as painting, that is not to be wondered at—it was a younger art in America; it is much more costly to produce and therefore more hampered by the demands of patrons; and if it is not more difficult than painting, it offers a much narrower range of possibilities for the attainment of distinction. If America during the late nineteenth century produced no sculptor comparable to Eakins and Ryder, it produced in Saint-Gaudens a man who had his moments of dignity and strength; in Warner, one who combined strength with grace and charm; in Barnard, a sculptor of originality and sometimes of power.

Several of these artists had not only finished their student years before the Centennial, but had already some reputation as painters. In this category was Homer, whose most significant work dates from the Tynemouth series of drawings and water colors which marked his adoption of the sea as his favorite theme. Homer had little formal instruction—some lessons in the night school of the National Academy, and a month or two with a French artist living in New York. He began drawing as a child; and even then, according to his biographer, he worked from life rather than from pictures as the beginner so often does. Throughout his career he seems to have paid but little attention to what his fellow artists

were doing. Yet it would be mistaken to assume that he remained entirely uninfluenced by the work of other men. La Farge, speaking of the French "men of 1830," said that "the lithographs from these men came into our market and affected many of us. Mr. Winslow Homer . . . was a student of these things and has, like himself, been largely made by them."

He did not adopt their style; but they no doubt helped him to work in the right way—and he insisted that talent was nothing but the capacity for doing hard work in the right way. It was probably from these French painters that he learned to avoid the mistaken realism of the Hudson River school; to bring out strongly the essential structure of figure or landscape and to suppress irrelevant details. Homer was as completely the realist as Courbet. He rarely worked from sketches; he liked to have the object before him in the exact light that he wanted in his picture. He could not always satisfy this preference, of course; the figures that he introduced into his canvases, sometimes in violent action, could not be posed at length. But atmospheric effects could be studied at leisure, if one waited for them to be reproduced exactly, and this appears to have been his way of studying them. He waited sometimes for years, refusing to finish the picture from memory. And he never modified color—"Never, never! When I have selected the thing carefully, I paint it exactly as it appears." According to his biographer, even his moonlight scenes were actually painted by moonlight, in order that effects of light and color might be exact. All this is not important, of course; the important thing is that he was a realist who knew how to grasp the moment, and to record it in a striking way. Mr. Downes well says that his work "abounds in the unexpectedness of the usual." Or perhaps one may put it

that he freshens one's perception of the usual by stimulating an awareness which custom has dulled. Whether he depict the foaming surge of breakers against a rocky headland, a pair of canoers shooting the rapids of a Canadian river, or a group of negroes fishing or swimming off a Southern coast, one realizes not only that thus and not otherwise must the scene have appeared, but that thus it is significant.

One must look, however, for no significance beyond this. The strength of these pictures, genuine as it is, does not spring from an equilibrium imposed by the painter upon the restless forces of his own imagination; it derives from his remarkable power to depict the forces of nature—the heavy surge of the sea, the exhausting struggle of rescuers against the fury of the storm, the weight of bodies and the energy of their movement. Nor may one look for the harmonies of color that sound and echo throughout the canvases of the born colorist. His color is just in its values, but it never appeals, like that of the Venetians or of Delacroix, to "that region of the imagination that is supposed to be under the exclusive dominion of music." His appeal, that is to say, is limited. None the less it is powerful and strongly individual; and it justifies ranking him among the foremost American artists.

John La Farge, born only a year later than Homer, began his professional career at about the same time. But while Homer was apprenticed to a lithographer in Boston, and later free-lancing in Boston and New York, La Farge, like Whistler, was in the midst of the powerful artistic movements that were agitating Paris in the 'fifties, coming in contact with "the manner of looking at things of a generation back" in the salon of his grand-uncle the Comte de Saint-Victor, one-time art-critic and

collector of fine paintings; and through his cousin the young critic Paul de Saint-Victor, already a power in the intellectual life of Paris, associating with many of the men who were moulding the future. He was young at the time of this first sojourn in Europe, but mature far beyond the average American of his years; for he had had the good fortune to be born into a French family with a long tradition of culture. During his childhood the society formed by his parents, his maternal grandparents, and their friends formed a little island of civilization in the eddying vulgarity of the New York of the 'forties. Even the "very elegant" furnishings of his father's house reflected an Old World culture. When the rest of New York was delighting in "butcher furniture" and antimacassars, buying spurious old masters or sentimental engravings, and avidly reading newspaper calculations of the total wealth represented at the soirées of wealthy inhabitants, the La Farge house was furnished in the style of the Empire, its walls were hung with paintings by Vernet, La Moyne, del Piombo, and Ruisdael, and its shelves were well furnished with the classics of French and English literature. Many of these books were beautifully illustrated; there was a set of Byron, for instance, with Turner's copperplates. Art and literature were never a new discovery to La Farge; he grew up with them. He read widely both in French and English. At six he had been thoroughly drilled in the eighteenth-century tradition of drawing by his grandfather, whom loss of fortune had forced to become a miniature painter and teacher of drawing. Thus, although he did not come to the artist's profession until he was almost thirty and had tried the study of law, he had really been preparing for it all his life.

These facts are important as explaining the mellow

culture, the wide learning, the complexity of mind, which sharply differentiated John La Farge from his countrymen. "Of all his friends," wrote Henry Adams in the famous *Education,* "La Farge alone owned a mind complex enough to contrast against the commonplaces of American uniformity." His culture, his learning, his complex and subtle intellect naturally determined the character and variety of his work. He drew on the art of the whole world as no American artist had known how to do before him, even entering in a remarkable degree into the spirit of Oriental culture, first, like Whistler, through the Japanese prints that became known to the Western world in the 'fifties, and later through a visit to Japan. In Europe, during his early stay there, he studied and copied the old masters in France, Germany, Denmark, England, and the Low Countries. He also came in contact with the Pre-Raphaelites, whose careful notation of minutiæ appealed to his aptitude for exact and subtle perception and influenced his early work. He read Chevreul's works on stained glass, and on optical views of color, and later said that they had determined the direction of his painting. He made optical experiments of his own; he experimented with methods and manners of painting; and he produced, in stained glass, tones that had never before been possible in that medium, with a luminosity surpassed only in the windows of the thirteenth century. He thought and studied deeply, and retained the knowledge he acquired. "He carried in his brain," says Mr. Cortissoz in his excellent biography, "a kind of anthology of all the decorative styles"; and he adapted them to his uses with an ingenuity which amounted almost to creative power.

Upon the least of his works he lavished his thought and his knowledge. He made innumerable studies; so

many that Dr. Rimmer, with whom he studied anatomy, warned him, saying, "When you make so many studies you discharge your memory." The early landscapes and flower-pieces which won him a reputation as a colorist are careful studies in the properties of light and color, the differentiation of tones and textures, the relations of lines and planes. In his early landscapes, indeed, especially the "Paradise Valley" in the Boston Museum, his experiments led to an anticipation of the researches of the Impressionists. Like Whistler, he had a particular fondness for refinement of tone, but he by no means shared Whistler's predilection for low-keyed harmonies. On the contrary, he liked strong, luminous color, and he knew how to make his pictures sing with it—especially those water colors and oils from the South Seas in which the tropical brilliance of the Samoan landscape provides a splendid setting for the beautiful brown forms of the native men and women, at rest and play or rhythmically grouped in ceremonial dances.

Save for the periods of his Japanese and Samoan trips, he had little opportunity for this kind of work after 1876, when he was called upon to decorate the interior of Trinity Church in Boston. That undertaking, the first important work of its kind in this country, marked the beginning of his career as a mural painter. From that time on, his energies were more and more absorbed in decoration; in painting great murals, in designing and superintending the execution of decorative work in various materials, and of course in the development of his famous opalescent glass. Of his decorative work I shall speak later. More than anything else, perhaps, it accounted for that remarkable prestige which caused him to be termed by those who resented it, the pope of American art. The resentment was unjustified, for both as art-

ist and as writer and lecturer on art, La Farge deserved this prestige. He was the most learned American artist of his time, and one of the most thoughtful. In the books which preserve his lectures and his writings, there are many finely discriminating remarks on artists and their work, many profound and illuminating observations. It is amazing that he found time, in spite of continuous ill health and the pressure of his productive work, to do as much as he did in the way of writing and lecturing; and it is fortunate, too, for in this way as well as through his work he helped mightily to promote and civilize American interest in art.

La Farge represented no school of art and no particular tendency. He was an eclectic. Another painter who may be classed as an independent was Thomas Eakins of Philadelphia, who, although he was a pupil of Gérôme and Bonnat and owed to them the accurate drawing which formed the basis of French academic teaching, remained uninfluenced by the vulgar uses to which those painters put their remarkable technique. Although he never studied with Barye, he owed more to the great sculptor than to either of them. He visited Barye's studio in Paris; he bought his works and kept them always by him. In his own work he did not seek to capture the spirit of any of the artistic movements that were afoot in France. He was as much of a realist as Homer, but his realism, like Homer's, was intensely individual. It owed no more to that of Courbet and his followers than to the photographic representation of Gérôme and Bonnat. It was not, one feels, inspired by any outside influence: it was in the temperament of the man. "That's the way it looked," he would say; and as his subject looked to him, so he represented it with searching and powerful objectivity. Even Copley did

not more faithfully record the wrinkles of an old face, the swelling veins of a hand, the accessories of costume or of setting. But with all his insistence upon detail, he was not overcome by it. He knew that the grand fundamentals of art are essentially simple, and he rarely forgot them or lost his grasp of them. "All the sciences," he said, "are done in a simple way; in mathematics the complicated things are reduced to simple things. So it is in painting. You reduce the whole thing to simple factors; you establish these and then work out from them, pushing them toward one another. This will make strong work."

The quotation reveals the temper of his mind. For him, art was more scientific than emotional. His art, like that of La Farge, is one of tireless analysis; but where La Farge attempted to analyze light and color, Eakins concentrated upon the effort to reveal the actuality of the objects before him. He dissected cadavers; he took an eager interest in photography, and did not hesitate to make use of photographs in his work; he made painstaking studies for the various parts of a composition. His passion for objectivity was such that he always kept a blackboard in his dining room, in order that any one who wished to do so might explain his argument by illustration. In his pictures his statement was complete and exhaustive. "The Chess Players," to cite one example, would have become merely photographic in the hands of a weaker man. The pattern of the carpet, the gleaming decanter and glasses on the side table, even the numerals of the clock on the wall, are rendered with a literalness that leaves nothing more to be said. "That's the way it looked." Yet one is no more conscious of all the details of the setting than one would be if one were looking upon the actual scene. He knows how

to keep the interest of the picture safely centered upon the three figures grouped under the light around the chess board, their fine old faces intent upon the hazards of the game. He can do this because he does not start from detail in building up his composition. He works the other way around, first reducing his problem to the essential relations of space, light, and mass, and adding the details only after these have been firmly established. On the rare occasions where he fails to attain structural harmony, the failure is not due to the obtrusion of detail; rather, as Mr. Pach pointed out in his excellent article on Eakins in the *Freeman,* it proceeds from the intensity of his concentration upon form and character.

Such a man will find the sufficient inspiration of his art in his immediate environment; he need not wander afield, as Church and Gifford before him, Blum and Walker in his own time, wandered afield, in search of picturesque and striking subjects. There were plenty of subjects around him: the men and women of his time, their domestic life, their occupations, their recreations. And because it suited his purpose to portray the life about him, it was given to Thomas Eakins more than to any other artist to render the essential spirit of the America of the late nineteenth century. He embodied that spirit, in his scientific point of view, in the energy of his effort to master the world of objects—and in what Isham laments as his neglect of the beauties and graces of painting. He was too much interested in penetrating to the reality of the objects that he painted, to seek refinement of tone or beauty of color, or to take account of the enveloping and harmonizing function of atmosphere. He modeled strongly in light and shadow, and his color, like his form, is simply that of the objects he saw before him, stated with the same literal honesty. It was perhaps

Courtesy of the Phillips Memorial Gallery, Washington, D. C.

RYDER. The Resurrection

RYDER. Moonlight Marine

Courtesy of Mr. N. E. Montrose

the very fact that he held up the mirror to his generation that caused him to be so little appreciated. He was considered inelegant and wanting in sentiment. These were criticisms that might very well have been directed at his countrymen. If he "neglected the beauties and graces of painting," the America of his time certainly took little account of the beauties and graces of living. He did not, as Mr. Alan Burroughs well says, "really need the elegance and the other qualities that he lacked, in order to portray a period in which those qualities were either side issues or assumed." But when one has assumed a virtue which one has not, it is a virtue one would dearly love to possess by nature; otherwise one would not assume it. Therefore one cherishes the pretense too much to be patient with the painter who disregards it.

No doubt there is in every sitter for a portrait a desire to be represented as he would like to look. Before his mirror, indeed, he perhaps idealizes himself a little, by instinctively belittling his worst features and overvaluing his best. This is why it is likely to be a bit of a shock to discover how one appears to other eyes; and it is why the portrait painter has had his perplexities as long as portraits have been painted. A portrait painter with Eakins's characteristics has little chance of winning favor with his sitters; his notation of their physical peculiarities will be too literal, and his analysis of character too searching. He will mitigate nothing in order to make a pleasing picture. And when one looks at those many fine portraits, so eloquent of the strength and nobility of the painter, one can understand that from the viewpoint of the sitters they must have been pretty trying. If nature has modeled a face unbeautifully, the artist does not tamper with nature's handiwork. If age or ill health has left wrinkles, hollow eyes, and sagging mus-

cles, these are noted as faithfully as the gleam of light on the curved back of a chair, or the objects scattered over a desk. He does not flatter; he does not even emphasize the better traits and soften the worse ones, but records them all with impartial objectivity. His men are as devoid of graces as the period in which they lived; and one feels, to twist Allston's saying of Malbone, that no woman ever gained any beauty from his hand. Yet it would be unfair to imply that he portrayed people merely in order to proclaim their objective existence, or even merely as problems in form, space, and light. If he had had no feeling about them, he would have been incapable of such profound insight into character. He responds to the mental energy and the strength of the scientists and doctors whom he portrays at their desks or in their clinics; he relishes the irony of the contrast between a certain cardinal's insignia of spiritual office, and the telltale imprint of materialism and worldliness upon his face; he surprises wistfulness in the faces of women, still restricted to the life of the emotions in a day when its claims are universally disregarded. There is more than a hint of tenderness in the portraits of his father, the rugged figure of some of the hunting scenes and "The Writing Master"; and in those of that gentle, sad-eyed old man who was his father-in-law. It is because he speaks with his instinct and his emotion as well as with his science, that to his present-day admirers his portraits seem so remarkably fine. The portrait of Signora Gomez d'Arza may have offended the actress herself; but the disinterested person sees that unlike El Greco as it is in every other way, it has his grand austerity. The plainness of the face in Miss Parker's portrait must have been painful to herself; but the figure is modeled with the intensity of a mind in which perception of form is so

keen and powerful that it becomes an emotional experience. The pose of "The Thinker" may have struck the man who stood for it as unconventional and awkward; but the figure stands on its feet with a firmness that Whistler would have envied, and the pose perfectly repeats and emphasizes the intense concentration of the face. If Eakins does not beautify his sitters, it can never be said that he renders them inexpressively.

His other pictures met with no greater popular approval than his portraits. They were neither sentimental nor "beautiful" enough to please an age in which the words "ideal beauty" were often upon the lips of artists and critics of art. Yet an age in which he is at last coming into his own is learning to appreciate their extraordinary qualities. What could be more humorously sympathetic than his portrayal of the singing cowboy in the water color of that name, or the other cowboy in "Home Ranch"; or of the solemn little "Dancing Negro Boy" who takes his fun so seriously? In "William Rush Carving the Allegorical Figure of the Schuylkill River" there is much charm in the way he surprises, in the shadowy depths of the studio, the figure of the old sculptor whose work he admired enough to pay it the tribute of this picture; in the way he has noted the subtle relations of light and shade upon the nude figure of the model, and the absorbed pose of the knitting chaperone who adds an amusing note of decorum to the scene. His mastery of the nude also shows to excellent advantage in the prize-fight scenes; and even better in "The Swimming Hole," where the figures—particularly the central one—are drawn with admirable force and expressiveness and grouped in a finely rhythmical composition. His most ambitious attempts are the large canvases of "The Gross Clinic" and "The Agnew

Clinic," the one now at Jefferson Medical College, the other at the University of Pennsylvania—the only important things of their kind since Rembrandt. They depict quite literally the circumstances which surround a surgical operation: the tiers of spectators in the background; in the foreground the unconscious patient, the operating surgeon, the assistants and nurses; the blood, too, and the horror, which made the pictures unpopular. But the blood and the horror, of course, no more impair their fine quality than they impair the quality of Rembrandt, or of Gerard David in that canvas at Bruges, so hard to look at and so beautifully painted, where the red of the wicked judge's flayed muscles answers the red of the executioners' costumes.

The pictures I have cited, and others as fine, have brought Thomas Eakins tardy recognition as a painter gifted and sometimes great. He did not live to see this vindication. During his lifetime, he was known as scientist and teacher rather than as painter. He was the scientist, indeed, curious and impersonal; but he was the artist, too, with remarkable power to discover the symbolism of reality. Perhaps it was his own knowledge of this that gave him the strength to continue, in spite of misunderstanding and neglect, in the way marked by his temperament and the quality of his vision.

§

The period which produced the realism of Homer and Eakins also marked the culmination of the American romantic movement. The three men in whose work the early landscape school culminated have already been mentioned. Midway between these and the landscape painters discussed in the foregoing chapter stood R. Swain Gifford, who felt the influence of a well-trained if not

Courtesy of the Cincinnati Museum Association

DUVENECK. Woman with Forget-me-nots

Courtesy of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

CHASE. An English Cod

brilliant Dutch painter, Albert van Beest. Gifford, like Church and Sanford R. Gifford, did some wandering in search of subjects, to Egypt and Algiers, but his typical landscape was a long stretch of brown moorland under a gray sky, the gravity which this color scheme suggests being traceable, probably, to the influence of the Dutch school.

Of the three principal romantic landscapists, George Inness was the oldest and the slowest to develop; a mystic by temperament, a Swedenborgian, and an enthusiast on many subjects, ranging from the art of Corot to the economics of Henry George. The thin and superficial results of the methods pursued by his contemporaries of the Hudson River school could not satisfy the demands of such a nature. He desired to find a way of expressing a deeper sentiment, such as he found in the works of the old masters and of the French Barbizon painters. He had far to go, from the panoramic method of his early work to the harmonious if not always powerful canvases of his latest period; and the record of his struggle is in his pictures, both in the gradual evolution of his style and his uneven quality. It was not until the 'seventies that he began really to find himself, and even then his uncertainty appeared in a frequent failure of harmony, due to his attempt to strengthen the composition by overstressing certain masses: for example, the bright foliage in "Autumn Oaks" sounding against the unpleasant blue of the clouds a discordant note that spoils the unity of impression. Certain pictures of this middle period, however, are satisfying in both form and color. In "Evening at Medford, Massachusetts," the dominant horizontal lines, relieved from monotony by the vertical lines of the tree-trunks in the foreground and the round masses of foliage in the distance, provide a sound structural basis

for the mood of twilight calm expressed in the just balance between the grave tone of the darkening landscape and the glow of evening in the sky. He painted a wide range of subjects: the delicate spring blossoms, the strong notes of the autumn landscape, the gloom of forests and of moonlight, the dramatic effect of a dark landscape against the flaming background of a sunset sky. His later pictures show a preference for harmonies in delicate tones; and in these harmonies there are no jarring notes. Where they are weak, their weakness proceeds from the loss of structural force in preoccupation with poetic sentiment.

Like Inness, both Wyant and Homer Martin began working in the panoramic manner, and their pictures in that manner do not differ strikingly from one another or from the early work of Inness. Nor does the early work of either bear any great resemblance to that generally associated with his name. They were both some ten years younger than Inness. Wyant, at the beginning of his career, came from Cincinnati to get advice from the older painter. But he did not follow Inness in his enthusiasm for the Barbizon painters, although now and then one sees, in landscapes like his "Glimpse of the Sea," a reminiscence of Rousseau. The chief European influence to be traced in his work is that of the English landscape painters. Although it has the romantic feeling, therefore, it reveals a love for the mist-laden atmosphere and pearly clouds that one associates with such painters as Constable and Old Crome. It has less variety of mood and manner than that of Inness and Martin: a glimpse of sky seen through the opening in a forest, or a wide sweep of quiet valley with a few trees in the foreground; the whole rendered in soft tones of green and brown and gray. He worked thus within rather

narrow limits, but what he had to say he said sincerely and with conviction if not with great power.

Unlike Wyant, Martin was strongly influenced by the painters of the Barbizon group. He was already an enthusiastic admirer of Corot when he first went to France in 1876, and Corot's influence was already evident in his work. But he was no slavish imitator of any other painter. What he had to say was his own. The Barbizon painters helped him to find out how to say it; and later the Impressionists. During a long visit to France in the 'eighties, he saw the works of the Impressionist painters, and although he was too wise to try to adapt their high key to the expression of his own rather melancholy poetic sentiment, he learned from them to give carrying power to his canvases through the division of color. He once wrote to Mr. Thomas B. Clarke of his pleasure in "putting little bits of paint alongside each other to try to make them twinkle." In his pictures, however, he made less use of broken color than of broken tones of the same color, laid on heavily with brush or palette-knife. The result is a pleasing texture and a fine vibrant quality, even in those pictures in such low key as "Manor-House at Criquebœuf." This long visit to France was of crucial importance in his career; for his best work was that of his last ten years, when he was putting into such fine canvases as "Church at Criquebœuf," "Normandy Trees," and "A Normandy Farm," the notes he had made then and the methods he had developed. Some one has called Martin a painter of tragic landscape. The feeling in his pictures is often, indeed, one of sorrow and desolation—a friend said they looked as if no one but God and the painter had seen the places. The mood was in his nature, and it was perhaps intensified by the circumstances of his life, which

was one of continuous poverty and discouragement. When one considers the obstacles he overcame in painting his best pictures, one must admire the marvelous courage of the man who, ill and poor and almost blind, was yet able to produce pictures so strong and so full of fine poetic quality; pictures more important than those of any other American romantic landscape painter, except Ryder.

Romantic in sentiment also were the pictures that George Fuller painted in his leisure hours after he had given up the profession of painter for that of farmer. When these pictures were first exhibited in 1876 they met with immediate success, for they appealed to the vogue for poetic mood that had been created by the success in America of the Barbizon painters. But Fuller is not to be grouped with the American Barbizon school. His work is not strong enough to convey adequately its mood of poetry and of mystery; it is wanting in solidity of structure and its color does not carry well. In both these respects Robert Loftin Newman was more successful; a painter who studied with Couture and through William Morris Hunt came under the influence of Millet's personality and his work. Newman lived and painted in almost complete obscurity, supported by the interest of a few friends and purchasers of his work—men like Wyatt Eaton, William M. Chase, Sir William van Horne, and Mr. Thomas B. Clarke, who was the Luman Reed of the period. Only once were his works publicly exhibited, through the efforts of his friends. His pictures are combinations of a few simple forms—a figure, or a small group of figures, against a bit of landscape—and are marked by an almost complete elimination of detail. His colors, too, are few, but his soft reds and yellows and browns are blended with a harmony that betokens

the true colorist, and gives carrying power to the poetic sentiment of the composition.

The mystery which is so strong an element in romantic art, which Fuller failed to communicate in his figures half-emerging from enveloping shadows, and which Newman sometimes renders with impressive sincerity, found its full expression in the work of Albert Pinkham Ryder, the one of all the American romanticists who loses nothing by comparison with the French masters of the school. Not that he resembles the French painters. His teacher, William Marshall, had been a pupil of Couture, but there is no trace of Couture's manner in the work of Ryder. His spirit and his technique are intensely individual, and cannot be compared with those of any other man. Yet the essence of Romanticism is in his low-keyed harmonies—his autumnal browns, his grays and ivories, his darkly luminous blues and greens—and in the strange and haunting shapes to which these harmonies give being. It is a long way from the carefully arranged harmonies of Whistler, the "nocturnes" and "symphonies" which impress one more with the painter's virtuosity than his creative power. Whistler was too consciously the æsthete; his works would prove it if he had never spoken out. Ryder is the antithesis of this, a man of imaginative power and of deep and quiet meditation; a poet and a dreamer, who projected his dreams on canvas and, dissatisfied with the result, repainted again and again until the picture was either ruined or became such a noble expression of poetic and religious sentiment as "The Resurrection" or "The Wayside Cross."

The forms which express this intensity of feeling are few and extremely simple, and so are the colors. Never did a painter accomplish more with a greater economy of means: a ship, a cloud, and an expanse of sea, all in

tones of gray and ivory; a phantom horse with Death for its rider, galloping around a race track in a landscape of grandly simple contours; a tent between two dark brown masses of trees, its pointed outline relieved against a patch of luminous blue and rose sky, and in the foreground the camels and horses of the Oriental camp. In the sea-pieces he often rendered his moonlight effects in finely differentiated tones of green and blue-green. In "A Sea Tragedy," one of the finest of these, the boat which is about to be dashed to pieces on the rocky headland is a dark patch of brown against the luminous green of the moonlit water. And what could be simpler and stronger than the design formed by the boat, the headland, the four strangely shaped clouds, the moon and its arabesques of light and shade upon the waves? The "Jonah," to use the painter's own description, is "a lovely turmoil of boiling water," and in this turmoil, the struggling Jonah between the dark masses of the whale and the boat, while from the clouds on the horizon Jehovah watches the scene, his hand lifted in the benediction that promises the miracle. It is a striking and entirely original rendition of the legend. But it was not of the legend alone that Ryder thought. He was also thinking of the "lovely turmoil." "If I get the scheme of color that haunts me," he wrote Mr. Clarke, "I think you will be delighted with it."

If there is economy of means, there was none of effort. The little panels and canvases (there are only five large ones) were kept for years, and reworked until the paint was thick upon them. He worked out his vision as he went along, and he was constantly thinking of ways to strengthen and improve his pictures. The heavy underpainting that resulted from this constant revision helped to give them that rich, enamel-like texture which is one

of their pleasing qualities; but the habit of adding new pigment before the preceding coat was sufficiently dry, or varnishing before the paint was thoroughly dry, has caused most of his paintings to crack, as the underpainting and overpainting expanded or contracted unequally. Sometimes, too, the immediate results were unfortunate—"I lost both the 'Lorelei' and 'The Passing Song,' but have them under way again." If the picture was not "lost," it was not always improved by so much revision. The earlier version of the "Coustance" is finer than the later chiefly because of its greater spontaneity. The moonlight breaking through the clouds; the ocean, calm and immense, and painted in exquisitely modulated tones of translucent blue-green; the dark shape of the boat, silhouetted against the moonlit water; all these evidence a fresh and dramatic conception which is lost in the second picture, beautiful and moving though it is. But it was Ryder's way to revise. A younger painter who knew him tells of visiting his studio and seeing a completely ruined canvas which, said the old artist, "was a fine thing twenty-five years ago when it was almost finished." Even when he sold his pictures he did not always let them go. Of another, he said that he had been foolish enough to sell it a number of years before, and the buyer had annoyed him a good deal, demanding to have it—"but now he only comes around about once a year." Perhaps this was the same buyer who told Ryder that he had arranged to have his funeral procession stop by the studio to collect his picture. "I told him," said Ryder, "that they shouldn't have it even then, unless 'twas finished." When Mr. Montross bought "An Oriental Encampment," the painter had been working on it for ten years, but he asked a little more time to finish it. It was three

years more before Mr. Montross got his picture; but this time the result of thirteen years labor was a masterpiece.

It was no mere eccentricity that made him work in this way. It was the groping of the creative spirit, on its great adventure in the uncharted regions of the imagination. It is easy to repeat what has already been done. But the master does not re-tread the ways that other men have blazed; he extends them. Perhaps Ryder's groping would not have been so slow or so wasteful if he had grown up in a great tradition of art. As it was, he was a pioneer, as Inness and Martin were pioneers, having a great deal to say, but having also, because of his comparative isolation from the great tradition, to create slowly and painfully the means of saying it. In a letter to Mr. Thomas B. Clarke, he spoke of his desultory methods, likening himself to an inchworm which crawls up a leaf or twig and clings to the very end, revolving in air, "trying to get hold of something to reach something. That's like me. I am trying to find something out there beyond the place where I have no footing." Mr. Frederick Fairchild Sherman, commenting on this letter, justly remarked that it was Ryder's ability to reach in his pictures this something beyond the actual, which made them so beautiful and so magical. It is true. The designs of his pictures lend themselves rather easily to analysis. It is the something beyond, the something which defies analysis, that makes them what they are. But this is only to say that Ryder's work shares the one distinguishing characteristic of great art.

At his best this man who lived so deeply in his thoughts that he could stand meditating for hours in a pouring rain among the noisy crowds of Broadway, at his best he is profoundly moving. More than any other American artist, perhaps, he proves the truth of Redon's dictum

Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

TARBELL. Reading Girl

THAYER. Caritas

Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

that the plane of art is the mind of the artist. He may find his subjects in German folklore, in Chaucer, Shakespeare, the Bible; but the shapes and colors which embody his interpretation are drawn from his own imagination; an imagination which receives the shapes and colors of the visible world and transmutes them into images of its dreams. Over his work broods the genius of the poet; the mystic poet of the self-portrait, painted at the age of thirty-one; the poet who loved children and was loved by them because he was still one of them; the poet whose gentleness of spirit made his friends think of him as Christ-like. His titles were poetic—"Toilers of the Sea," "The Temple of the Mind," "The Waste of Waters is Their Home." But being a poet, he was incapable of confusing the province of his own medium with that of literature. He painted many poems, if one use William Morris Hunt's definition; if he wished to write one, however, he did so in words, and some of his single poetic lines are very fine. Often he wrote verses to accompany his pictures—"The Flying Dutchman," "Dancing Dryads," "Ophelia," "Joan of Arc." But the picture of "The Flying Dutchman" is no more literary in its interest than Delacroix's famous illustrations of "Faust" or Daumier's of "Don Quixote." The legend stirs the imagination of poet and painter alike. With the one it becomes the pretext for a poem, with the other for a picture. In neither case is it more than pretext. With Ryder it is a pretext for evoking, from the depths of his spirit, images which remind one not so much of what one has seen as of what one has felt about what one has seen; images which appeal to that mystery-haunted region of the mind where the known and the imagined meet and inextricably mingle.

There were many painters, both of figure and land-

scape, whose work partook of the characteristics of Romanticism. The Impressionists were the chief continuators of the tradition; but since their method of painting was so radically different from that of the men just discussed, they will be considered separately. Among those painters who continued more or less in the manner of the earlier school may be mentioned William Sartain, who, although he studied at the Beaux-Arts, stands, like R. Swain Gifford, somewhere between the earlier school and the principal Romanticists. Like Gifford, he found many of his subjects in Europe and Algiers; and his work, although it is neither strikingly original nor important, has the virtues of charm and sincerity. Some of his Algerian street scenes are especially pleasing. Francis Murphy was a pupil of Wyant, but he developed a manner of his own. Some of his small landscapes, especially, share the sentiment and something of the strength of the more important landscape painters. Horatio Walker came under the influence of Millet and Troyon during his student years; and his pictures of French-Canadian farm life have something of the charm of their French prototypes. It may be mentioned here that his mural illustrations of Lyric Poetry in the Library of Congress are more successful than most of the decorative works which add gorgeousness if no high artistic quality to the interior of that much-decorated building. Another romantic painter was Wyatt Eaton, who studied under Gérôme, lived for a time near Millet at Barbizon, and after his return painted pictures which evidence a sensitive if not robust feeling for landscape and for the beauty of the nude figure. He did some good crayon portraits—Bryant, Longfellow, Emerson, Whittier, Holmes, which were engraved by Timothy Cole for the *Century*. His oil portrait of Bryant, in the Brooklyn

Museum, is good enough to deserve mention. One feels that H. W. Ranger's landscapes hardly merited the reputation they brought him. It is hard to find in them anything that appears to be his own.

Standing also among the romantic painters, but somewhat apart, was Ralph Blakelock, who, with Ryder, was usually singled out for grudging approval mingled with admonition by the critics of the time. He has been likened to Rousseau the *douanier,* although the only possible resemblance that can be traced in his work is a certain naïveté which comes out more strongly in "Peace among the Nations" than in any other picture of his that I have seen. He resembled Ryder in that his pictures were the creations of his own imagination; but he lacked Ryder's constructive power and strength of sentiment. His typical picture is a forest interior, with great trees painted in tones of green and brown and relieved with tapestry-like effect against a sky mottled with feathery clouds. Sunset or moonlight is occasionally substituted for the mottled blue and white, and figures, often a group of Indians, are introduced. His work is not powerful, but it is original both in conception and execution and not to be confused with that of any other painter.

Chapter Seven

The Revival of Art (*Continued*)

OF THOSE painters who may be regarded as representative of the European schools, there were two groups: those who had felt the influence of Munich and those who had studied in the schools and studios of France. Not all of these last may be regarded as school men. Most of the American students in France studied in the schools—the Beaux-Arts, the academies Julien or Colarossi, or in studios where the methods taught did not differ essentially from those of the schools. But several of them, as we have seen, felt more strongly the influence of the non-academic artists than that of the school—of Barye, Corot, Courbet, and the Impressionists. The number of those who continued in the pseudo-classical tradition of the academy is legion; but only a few attained to a degree of individuality which justifies singling them out for mention. The greater number were content to produce the usual salon pictures, or to substitute for them the less unwieldy but no more significant canvases which are to be seen in rather oppressive numbers on the walls of American museums.

The French influence, whether of the school or the independent groups, was more lasting than that of Munich. Although the influence of Munich for a time

in the 'seventies overshadowed that of Paris, the limitations of the school, the unsoundness of its methods, caused it to be abandoned shortly by American students in favor of French instruction. Even in Munich the painters soon gave up the bituminous backgrounds and black shadows of their imitation old masters; and so did the American exponents of the school.

The difference between the training of Munich and that of Paris was more important, however, than the mere use of bitumen or the imitation of time-darkened old pictures. The basis of teaching in the French schools was that of carefully accurate drawing, especially from the nude model. Little attention was given to the use of the brush, save in the studio of Carolus-Duran, Sargent's teacher, who based his instruction primarily on painting. The method of Munich—a method which represented a revolt against the dulling drudgery of the academic method—was that of drawing directly with the brush, heavily loaded with paint, and defining in bold strokes planes, colors, and textures. The method gives scope for a remarkable technical virtuosity, although it lends itself easily to a false appearance of breadth and dash; and its use permits of a spontaneity which may be lost by the painter who leans too heavily on the charcoal drawing. But the combination of bitumen with bold brushwork, employed to give an effect of richness and mastery, was really a sort of artistic faking. It enabled imitation of the darkened works of those early masters of direct painting whom the members of the school studied so closely and mistakenly. But along with the apparent richness and the apparent brilliant mastery went heaviness and a decidedly limited range of possibilities. Hence its disappearance from an art world which was

feeling more and more strongly the influence of the "plein-air" school of painting.

Most prominent among the American exponents of the Munich training, both through their own work and their influence on the work of others, were Frank Duveneck and William Merritt Chase. Duveneck was the first of the two to go abroad, and the first to win reputation in America. He knew something of painting before he went to Munich, having decorated altars for the Benedictine friars in Cincinnati, and later traveled as assistant to a "fresco-painter" who decorated churches in the Middle West and Canada. In Munich he soon developed a virtuosity which inspired imitation among other painters and brought him a number of pupils. The five paintings which he exhibited in Boston in 1875, at the invitation of the Boston Art Club, brought him immediate recognition and were largely instrumental in winning for the school the prestige which it enjoyed for a time among American artists and art lovers. Like the other members of the school, he imitated the old masters, and he used to carry his paintings to the Pinakothek to see them beside those of the Dutch and Flemish painters, whom he chiefly admired. In his later work, he yielded to French influence to the extent of substituting cool gray shadows for the bitumen of Munich.

But his later work is meager in quantity and wanting in the brilliant workmanship that gives interest to his earlier pictures. His period of genuine productivity, indeed, was short. Perhaps he had gone as far as the methods of his school could carry him, and was unable, either temperamentally or through force of circumstances, to assimilate new influences. For some reason his development practically ceased. He painted less and with less sureness; he turned from painting to etching for a while

in Venice, and when his plates of the Riva were exhibited in London, where his name was unknown, Whistler was suspected of their authorship. The controversy which ensued between Whistler and his brother-in-law, the etcher Seymour Haden, is famous. The etchings really bear little resemblance to Whistler's; but they are much more like him than the later ones, which are very large, ungainly, and heavily loaded with detail in thoroughgoing, pedestrian German fashion. But Duveneck did not follow up this beginning. In 1889, after the death of his wife, he returned to Cincinnati, and devoted the rest of his life to teaching in the academy there. For a time he studied sculpture, and produced the memorial to his wife which stands over her grave in Florence; a reclining portrait-figure after the fashion of those which embody so much of the plastic genius of the Middle Ages. During these later years he did little painting; and his reputation, therefore, chiefly rests on the work of his student years and those immediately following, work chiefly in portraiture which, although it is frankly imitative, is brilliant in execution and shows a lively sense of character.

Perhaps if Duveneck had remained in closer contact with other artists, if he had been nearer the center of action, he might have been stimulated to work and experiment, and thus have developed a more individual style and point of view. As it was, he never got far beyond the merits and defects of the school to which he belonged. The development of William M. Chase's art gives some hint of what Duveneck's might have been under more favorable circumstances. Chase went to Munich after some study with a portrait painter in Indianapolis and two years in St. Louis during which he painted chiefly still life. He became one of the brilliant

painters of the school. Now and then one sees in an exhibition one of his pictures from those early days. They are typical of Munich, in their dark shadows and broad brushwork, and they have in a remarkable degree the virtuosity at which it aimed. After his return to America, to take charge of the classes in painting at the Art Students' League, Chase was one of the most active and influential figures in the art life of the country, teaching, lecturing, and painting throughout a busy and successful career. He was one of the moving spirits in the Society of American Artists, and its president for ten years. He taught in Philadelphia and New York. His pupils seceded from the Art Students' League and he had his own school, known first as the Chase school, later as the New York school. Later still, he taught again at the League. For a number of years he had a large summer school yearly at Shinnecock, on Long Island, to which students came from all over the country. With all this remarkable activity as a teacher, he remained above all the painter who delighted in his profession. He painted still life, portraits, landscape, genre. He worked in all mediums—oil, water color, black and white, pastel—and his work, although it is uneven in quality, is at its best distinguished. He soon abandoned the black shadows of Munich and its production of imitation old masters. It was a cardinal point of his philosophy that it did not matter what one chose to paint; the important thing was to paint well—a philosophy of art that was much needed in the America of his day. Like Eakins, he found the people and scenes of his time sufficient subjects: the interior of his house at Shinnecock, with the children at play; or the studio, with its old furniture, its tapestries and pictures (he was a great collector); the people whose likenesses were sometimes too superficially rendered, but

Courtesy of the Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts

TWACHTMAN. The Hemlock Pool

Courtesy of Mrs. Weir

WEIR. The Donkey Ride

oftener with character and distinction. He had not, however, the profundity that made Eakins the unique interpreter of the period. His still life deserves especial mention; particularly those pictures of fish in which no painter has surpassed him. The limp weight, the beautiful sheen of the scales, the subtle variations in the silvery tones; all are rendered with a quality of painting that is sheerly delightful.

Among the other representatives of the Munich school may be mentioned Walter Shirlaw and J. Frank Currier. Shirlaw, in addition to being a painter, did some good illustration, and also made some designs for stained glass. His earlier paintings were in genre—"Toning the Bell," "Sheep-Shearing in the Bavarian Highlands," "Vermont Marble Quarry." But his later works were more fanciful, and showed a strong predilection for the nude, which he handled with grace and charm. Currier lived abroad for thirty years, chiefly in Munich or Vienna, and his work is little known in this country. He did many kinds of work, but not simultaneously. His method was to "work himself out" in one line and then concentrate on another—a method which betrayed his spiritual unrest. For with all his restless seeking, his talent never found complete expression.

The chief tendency of the painters who continued the academism of their French studies was toward a concern with chiefly æsthetic problems. They wanted to paint good pictures, rather than to please the public with graphic story-telling. Their intention was laudable, even when their performance left something to be desired. But having brought back with them, along with the higher æsthetic standard that they had gained from their contact with European art, the academic penchant for the ideal or the picturesque in subject, they were

not prepared to go so far as to insist upon the relative unimportance of subject. Finding the life of their time unsuited to their notion of what was proper material for art, they were obliged either to seek the picturesque abroad, or the ideal at home. Melchers found his subjects among the village folk of Holland, with their quaint and colorful costumes and their ancient folk-ways. Those painters who sought the ideal at home found their possibilities limited. They could paint landscape, of course, and portraits when opportunity offered. But there was little interest in historical or religious painting, except in the field of mural decoration, and while painting of the nude was tolerated, the prejudice against it was still strong enough to discourage its production. With their choice thus limited by the conditions of their time, such painters as Tarbell, Dewing, and Abbott Thayer found the solution of their problem in that hymn to womanhood (I quote Faure) which sounded through French nineteenth-century painting. But in America, unfortunately, the hymn became a sentimental ballad. This was perhaps not entirely the fault of the artists. The sentimentality of the middle period had by no means entirely disappeared; and American sentiment preferred to regard woman in one of two aspects: the virgin, or the mother; perhaps because these aspects gave less scope for the frank sensuousness with which she has been depicted by many great masters. This prejudice may have had something to do with the inspiration of Mr. Brush's popular inanities; it may inspire the "codfish madonnas" of Mr. Hawthorne, to use the picturesque expression of a fellow painter. It may also have inspired those Tarbells which have been rhapsodically likened to Vermeers, pictures of which the best that one can say is that they have a certain charm without originality or strength.

Also those willowy figures of Mr. Dewing, seated in dimly lighted interiors, at the piano, or pensively doing nothing except to look decorative. One is reminded of the sentimental figure pieces of the middle period. The feeling is not vastly different; it is the technique that is improved. And this fact brings to mind once more the searching question of Millet: "What have you to say with it?"

It was a time when Ideal Beauty was much talked of; and Ideal Beauty, among those who sought it, was conceived of as something tenuous and ethereal, having as little relation as possible to the vulgar realities of this world. This spirit, no doubt, was the spirit which found something "gross" in the robust women of the people whom Winslow Homer depicted standing up strongly against the gale; this spirit inspired those insubstantial maidens of Saint-Gaudens, clad in pseudo-Greek draperies which conceal a woeful lack of form, and somehow reminiscent of college girls dressed up for the performance of an academic misconception of a Greek play. It inspired too, perhaps, the virgins of Abbott Thayer, also draped in the classic costume of the school, and flanked by children charmingly depicted. These innocent and sometimes even winged young creatures, a bit wistful under the burden of so much sanctity, are saved from banality by the artistic sincerity of the painter. La Farge has somewhere remarked that the moral state of the painter is evident in every stroke of his brush. It does not, perhaps, greatly matter what an artist undertakes to do, although a conventional restriction upon what he may attempt, may hamper his expression. The important thing is that his moral state shall be such as to give significance to what he does. The significance of Thayer's work may not be profound, but it is genuine.

These figure pieces are well composed, if somewhat conventionally, and they show a true painter's feeling for form and color and the quality of his medium. His rare paintings in genre show these qualities. In landscape he was less successful. He did a number of portraits, and some of these are among his most satisfying works. His heads of children are especially charming.

§

The most important influence exerted upon American artists by French art of the late nineteenth century was derived from a group of men who were as much execrated by academicians as the Barbizon painters had been before them. They were also as little concerned as the Barbizon painters had been with the methods prescribed by the academy, and what Mr. Pach has well called its "hierarchical arrangement of subjects." Their chief interest was that analysis of light which had been made possible through the use of divided color. Monet painted his subjects—Rouen Cathedral, for example—again and again, studying the effects of color produced by different lights. Sisley, Pissarro, and the others of the group worked in the same naturalistic spirit. The high-keyed canvases which proved their determination to abandon the conventional idea of color relations in landscape, and to follow the evidence of their own eyes, shocked an art world only just beginning to reconcile itself to the milder heresies of the Barbizon painters, and won for the new school the derisive title of "Impressionists." It was only after the antagonism aroused by the novelty of their method had died down that a later generation to which the method itself had become a matter of course, recognized in them the real continu-

ators of the great tradition of landscape; the spiritual children of Corot, Rousseau, and Millet.

The first American artists to be influenced by this new movement, and two of its chief exponents in this country, were John H. Twachtman and J. Alden Weir. Twachtman had studied in Munich under Duveneck and Lœfftz. But in 1889 he went again to Europe, this time to Paris, and felt so strongly the influence of the Impressionists that one looks in vain for any trace of Munich in his later works, those intimate landscapes in delicate opalescent tints which are generally associated with his name. The great charm of his color lies in his feeling for nuances of tone, and his ability to render palpable the enveloping veil of atmosphere. Perhaps it was because of his love for opalescent hues that he often chose to paint winter scenes, where the light on the snow is refracted in the purest tints of blue and green, rose and violet; or waterfalls, where the light upon the water and the spray is refracted in the same pure colors. His few etchings have great charm. I remember a snow scene which renders in a few delicate lines the feeling of the winter landscape. The plates are small and the drawings are slight—a bridge and a few houses, a group of boats, or a landscape like the one mentioned above—but the essentials of rhythmical composition are there, and the effect of light is well rendered, with something of the feeling of evanescence that is in the paintings. His work was not popular; his pictures sold with difficulty and he never sold an etching. He died too soon to share in the reputation and comparative prosperity enjoyed by others of his group after the prejudice against its method had been overcome.

Julian Alden Weir made his first studies under his father, Robert W. Weir, and later became a pupil of

Gérôme at the Beaux-Arts. Perhaps it was this long and careful training that caused him to warn his own pupils against "too much drawing." During his student years he became a friend and follower of Bastien-Lepage, a rebel against the hard, dry modeling of the Academy, and painter of pictures—among them the famous portrait of his grandfather—which embodied his idea that the artist should get "back to nature" by painting in the open air. For Weir it was a logical next step from this to the open-air studies of the Impressionists, a step which he took in the late 'eighties, after having painted those fine flower pieces and portraits which show the influence not only of Bastien-Lepage, but of his own enthusiastic study of Velasquez and Manet. The change is easily traceable in his work, from the contrasts of light and dark which mark the earlier pictures, to the relations of color in a uniform light which mark the latest ones. In his impressionistic landscapes, the predominating color is a cool gray-green, employed in subtle variations of tone, and relieved from monotony by notes of contrasting color. Thus, while they are in high key, they do not sparkle like those of painters who employed a wider variety of hues—some of Mr. Hassam's, for example. But if they are thus wanting in brilliance, the lack is compensated for by fine harmony and an absence of the garishness which sometimes mars the work of men who employed the methods of the school without that sure instinct for color values which guided its great exponents to complete mastery over the most daring color combinations. Weir cannot be ranked with these, but among the American Impressionists his work holds a high place. He displayed more versatility than any of them. Such pictures as "The Green Bodice," "The Orchid," and above all "The Donkey Ride" show the distinction of his figure

painting. Of all his figure paintings, perhaps, "The Donkey Ride" is the most beautiful. The soft gray of the donkeys, the cool green of the landscape, the blue of the sky, the charming, brightly-dressed figures of the two children; all these combine in a truly fine composition and a color pattern that has a tapestry-like richness. It is a personal judgment, of course, but my own preference is for his figure pieces and portraits. In these there is not, it seems to me, the tendency to lose structure in preoccupation with light and color that one finds in some of the landscapes. I say this even while acknowledging the obvious excellence of such landscapes as "The Red Bridge," "Pan and the Wolf," and "The Fishing Party." Portraits, of course, are figure pieces; and in these Weir shows a fine power of characterization, notably in the portraits of members of his family, among them several portrait etchings, and in that portrait in the National Academy in which he proved his sympathetic insight into the shy, sensitive, poetic nature of his friend Albert P. Ryder.

He was one of the important contributors to American etching; and here again he chose a wide variety of subjects—figure pieces, portraits, landscapes, and urban scenes. Effects of light interested him in etching as in painting, and in some of his plates he succeeded admirably in rendering them. The distinction of his talent and his mind came out in his etchings as in his paintings; and so did the charm which all subjects held for him, and the freshness of his approach to them. There is something of Whistler's influence, perhaps, which is not remarkable considering the importance of Whistler's own etchings and the fact that the two were friends. Whistler's influence is also frankly acknowledged in the titles of the nocturnes, "Queensborough Bridge" and

"The Plaza," which capture the mystery and glamour of New York at night, with the dark masses of its buildings and its myriad twinkling lights.

Weir was a founder of the Society of American Artists, and one of its most active members. In the 'nineties he became one of that group known as "The Ten," which for some twenty years exhibited annually in New York and other cities; a group which also included Twachtman, Hassam, Tarbell, Dewing, and after Twachtman's death William M. Chase. The idea was Mr. Hassam's. This able painter studied in Paris, under Boulanger and Lefebvre, but like so many other American artists, found outside the school the influences which were to mould his art. His work is warmer and more brilliant in color than that of Weir or Twachtman, especially in those canvases in which the objects are seen not through a subduing haze, but standing out in all the brightness of their component hues, in air of sparkling clarity. A recent exhibition at the Macbeth gallery gave a sort of résumé of Mr. Hassam's development, from the French scenes of 1888 down to 1919. It left an impression of pleasing variety within the limits of his chosen method. His work is uneven—what artist's is not?—within the wider range of unevenness which circumstances impose upon the American artist; but an artist may justly claim to be judged by his best work, and Mr. Hassam's best has been and continues to be such as to place him among our important artists. He has painted a variety of subjects —landscapes, figures, still life, street scenes—and he has produced some distinguished etchings. Among his pictures of the last dozen years none is more satisfying than those of war-time New York, in which he utilized with fine effectiveness the opportunities for beautiful design and glowing color offered by the flag-hung streets.

Weir. The Evening Lamp (*etching*)

HASSAM. Madison Square

Collection of Mr. G. F. McKinney; courtesy of the Macbeth Gallery

Theodore Robinson, friend and pupil of Monet, was a minor member of the American Impressionist group, but a minor who did some excellent work. Mary Cassatt is usually numbered with them, but her work was strongly influenced by Degas, and like him she is really not to be counted an Impressionist, although both she and Degas exhibited with the Impressionists in Paris. She was not, as is generally supposed, a pupil of Degas, although she bought his pictures at a time when he had few buyers, and profited much by his friendship. Her best pictures, indeed, are those in which his influence is strongest. Her typical subjects, especially in later years, were mothers and children. They are real mothers and children, however, not the kind that Bouguereau concocted from sugar and syrup. Even after her strength and the freshness of her vision had failed, her command of pure, harmonious color made her pictures pleasing. Indeed, in the sureness of her color she is rather more closely related to the French artists among whom she lived than to her American contemporaries.

Of all the American painters who came under the fruitful influence of Impressionism, Maurice Prendergast was by far the most important. But since his work seemed to grow younger as the man himself grew older, since his finest canvases therefore belong to the ten or fifteen years before his death in 1924, and since, above all, he was in spirit so entirely of our own time, it seems appropriate to include him among the modern painters, and he will therefore be discussed later.

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The line between portraiture and the other branches of painting cannot be as rigidly drawn in this period as in those preceding it. Fewer artists devoted themselves

exclusively to portrait painting, for the excellent reason that there was less demand for portraits. Photography ensured an exact likeness at little expense, and people generally contented themselves with photographs. Having one's portrait painted was no longer a duty to one's family; it was a luxury, and one which fell more or less —mostly more—into the category of importations. The native portrait painter was not practically encouraged; so that it is not surprising that many of the excellent portraits of the time were painted not on order at all, but primarily as "subjects," like other figure pieces, for which the artist might employ a model or avail himself of the co-operation of his friends or the members of his family, as sitters.

Thomas Eakins was the best portrait painter of the time; Sargent the most famous. Whistler painted, in addition to the celebrated portraits of his mother and Thomas Carlyle, a number of carefully arranged portraits, among which that of Miss Alexander is almost as famous as the other two. He took much more interest in his pictures as compositions than as portraits, was most exacting in regard to costume and pose, and worked so slowly, with so many complete erasures and new beginnings, that his subjects were ready to drop from fatigue. Eakins must also have been a slow worker, but as he did not demand such picturesque poses, his sitters probably suffered less. Both Duveneck and Chase painted many portraits. Abbott Thayer's are among his best works; so are J. Alden Weir's. Some of Tarbell's have interest added to good workmanship. Alfred Q. Collins was a sincere and gifted portrait painter. It should also be mentioned that Eastman Johnson continued throughout the period to produce portraits some of which have

distinction in spite of more than an occasional outcropping of the prosaic Düsseldorf technique.

The most prominent American portrait painter of the time was not born in America, nor did he live in the United States, although during the last years of his life he spent much time here. John Singer Sargent was born of American parents living in Florence, was educated in Europe, and entered the studio of Carolus-Duran at the age of seventeen, after having made his first studies in the academy at Florence. He soon developed the facility of execution for which he was noted among painters; a facility unparalleled among American artists since Stuart. So rapid was his development, indeed, that he attracted much attention even during his student years; and to his student years and those immediately following belong those of his pictures which are most completely satisfying, pictures in which dexterity had not yet led to superficiality, in which probity of drawing had not given way to the brilliant faking of many later canvases. To this period of his life belong the fine portrait of Madame G., now in the Metropolitan Museum, the "Femme au Gant" of the Luxembourg, and the "El Jaleo" of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. This last picture is an amazing *tour de force*. The canvas is large—the figure of the dancer is life-size—and yet the scene has all the spontaneity of a sketch. It is not as though the painter had arrested the moment; rather, he has recorded its flight. In another second the gesture of the dancer and her posture will change, and the strong lights and shadows from the footlights will flow into new rhythms with her movement. The seated figures in the background—the musicians who play with such spirit, the singer who throws back his head in the sudden fervor of his song, the dancers who vent their enthusiasm in a

wild tossing of arms—all these are in swiftly continuous movement which creates ever changing patterns. One sees not only the rhythms of the instant but the rhythms which have preceded them and those into which they will merge; as one remembers the chords of a musical passage and anticipates their resolution. Here are Sargent's distinguishing qualities at their very best: his accurate observation of the most fleeting movement or expression, and the rapidity of execution which enabled him to record it without any of that laborious effort which may destroy the spontaneity of the artist's original impression.

But he had the defects of his excellences, and at the last they undid him. Isham remarks that his portraits have the lightness and swiftness of a sketch. There is, indeed, in all of his work something of the quality of the sketch. One is reminded of what Inness once said to a young artist who proudly displayed a picture on which he had expended much labor: "Now all you have to do is to go ahead and finish it." Being able to accomplish so much with so little effort, Sargent was content to go no further, and the result is that from most of his works one gets an impression of incompleteness. What was worse, he was more and more often content that even the sketch should be meretricious. The circumstances of his life were in part, perhaps, accountable for his failure in seriousness. His astounding facility, his ability to capture a likeness with none of that laboriousness which tires the sitter even though it may result in a masterpiece, gave him immediate popularity as a portrait painter. Here was an artist who could paint his sitters exactly as they appeared before him, in all the smartness of their fashionable attire, with all the appearance of elegance and distinction that they chose to as-

Courtesy of Paul Rosenberg & Co., Inc.

CASSATT. La Loge

sume; who would not—could not, indeed—penetrate beyond these in any embarrassing search for deeper reality; and who would accomplish the miracle at a couple of sittings, with a bravura calculated to appeal strongly to that same popular delight in sheer technique which brings swift applause to the coloratura soprano who can decorate a cheap song with a succession of difficult trills and cadenzas. Lacking the artistic integrity or the strength to resist the demand for smart portraits, he became a sort of official portrait painter to the "rich and well-born" of his time, at prices which made having a Sargent portrait a sort of patent of *richesse*. And having drifted into the practice of "giving the public what they wanted," he became as indifferent to æsthetic quality as the public itself. Always a juggler, who knew how to get brilliant effects by inventing ingenious turns of the brush, he displayed his virtuosity at large profit, before an enraptured public.

What though he did this a bit contemptuously, as one who knew the triviality of the taste to which he catered? His awareness did not save him from the disintegration that comes from truckling to a vulgar taste. One would prefer to believe he was sincerely mediocre. He had no illusions about these "society portraits." He knew when they were bad, and he disliked the demands that kept him turning them out. But he did not make up his mind to refuse them until, as Monet remarked, it was too late. Not that they were uniformly bad; now and then, perhaps when the sitter before him aroused a personal interest, he remembered what he had learned of drawing in his studies in France, and the fine seriousness in the work of the men with whom he had associated; and then he would produce a portrait which showed something of his early quality, like that of Asher Wertheimer (the

Wertheimer portraits in the National Gallery in London are an almost complete résumé of the painter, from his best to his worst) or that remarkable portrait of William M. Chase which hangs in the Metropolitan Museum. But too often his portraits were what he himself called "rotten stuff"; too often they had the ostentatious emptiness of "The Wyndham Sisters" of the Metropolitan Museum, the "Mr. and Mrs. Stokes" of the Brooklyn Museum, or "The Countess of Warwick and her Son" of the Worcester Museum, accorded the doubtful honor of reproduction on the jacket of Mr. Pach's *Ananias*.

One of the chief penalties—or compensations, as one will—of spiritual deterioration is that the person in whom it takes place is rarely aware of it. Sargent apparently did not realize what his compromise was doing to him. He honestly thought he could go back to serious work after having done so much that was insincere; and no doubt he believed in what he regarded as his serious work. But although there is now and then a hint of his early power in the water colors, or in one of the late portraits, it is no more than a hint; and in the decorations for the Boston Museum, and that sublime banality, "The Marching Soldiers" at Harvard, there is not even that. One has only to place a photograph of "Marching Soldiers" beside one of "El Jaleo" to realize the completeness of his disintegration. Even the technical virtuosity that had helped him to cover so much emptiness in the past, was gone. It is a depressing outcome; but it is unfortunately not unusual. Indeed, the conditions of modern life and modern art conduce to such disintegration in all fields of creative work. One regrets the need to take note of it, but in a man of Sargent's great ability and reputation one is forced to do so. Because of that ability and that reputation, his career

constitutes a proof, too conspicuous to be disregarded, of the truth of Cézanne's great saying, that "art must be incorruptible; it cannot be incorruptible part of the time."

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In the sculpture of the period, the influence of the French school supplanted that of the Italian. This was fortunate. The French school could impart something of the great tradition which Italian sculpture had entirely lost. But it is perhaps because there was less opportunity for American students of sculpture in Paris than for students of painting, to come under the influence of men of genius working outside the school, that the French influence has been less fruitful in American sculpture than in American painting. Barye and Carpeaux both died in 1875. The only sculptor of genius in France during the last quarter of the nineteenth century was Rodin; and Rodin, with all his great ability, was less complete than Barye; he had characteristics that might too easily be adopted as mannerisms by those who would feel his influence without sharing his passion. He would leave the forms only half-detached from the block, and convey thus a sense of mystery and fate, where a disciple, not sharing this sense of mystery and fate, would succeed in conveying only one of incompleteness or sentimentality. He modeled with the utmost subtlety the soft palpitations of the flesh, responding to the profound movements of the spirit. But it was a dangerous example for other sculptors, who, wanting his intense perception of these inner impulses, would only imitate the subtlety of the superficial modeling, and attain the softness without the life that gave it meaning. Rodin was a great sculptor; but of all great sculptors he is the least sculptural—perhaps because he is one of the most realistic. His art is

one primarily of accents, which may easily become meaningless in the hands of a sculptor who, in preoccupation with accents, loses his grasp of the elements of structure (and structure, it need hardly be said, has less to do with an exact knowledge of anatomy than with a sense of proportion; it is abstract, not concrete). Even the influence of Rodin, therefore, has been in much the same direction as that of the school; that is to say, toward the loss of the essential planes and proportions in a soft and superficial realism.

This tendency is strengthened, no doubt, by the methods generally used in modern sculpture. The sculptor who merely builds up his figures in plaster and turns them over to a stonecutter cannot have the knowledge of the stone and the understanding of its legitimate possibilities that he might have if he himself worked in stone. He works in a soft material, in terms of that material; and when his work is pointed up and hewn in the stone, the result appears for what it is: an attempt to translate one material into terms of another. Mr. George Grey Barnard, in a recent interview, stated this difficulty in words which deserve to be quoted:

> The Egyptians, the Greeks, and Gothic sculptors got architectural effects in sculpture which modern American sculptors cannot get. They knew what the chisel could do. They drew on stone with charcoal; and cut out their lines with chisels. These long, sweeping lines gave an architectural effect which is not attained today with the modern method of pointing up. The present-day American sculptor models in clay and turns his model over to a professional worker in stone, who produces the final work by the pointing-up process—that is, taking a number of fixed points and making a copy in stone by measurements. The result is static, lacking the vital quality of ancient sculpture. . . . There are only a few men living today who know [the effects of the ancient use of the chisel].

Courtesy of the Grand Central Art Galleries

SARGENT. General Wood

WARNER. J. Alden Weir

Courtesy of Mrs. Warner

In this matter we might learn much from our neighbors the Mexicans. Only recently it was my privilege to see some motion pictures taken by Mr. Covarrubias, of the children in a Mexican school, hewing from the stone truly sculptural figures of fowl and animals, of which they had a small menagerie to serve as models. One hardly knew whether to be more impressed with their evident enthusiasm or with the quality of their work, which showed in every line its descent from the monumental sculptures of their ancestors.

Out of the want of structural force that makes so much sculpture, in Mr. John Sloan's words, "bad drawing that you can stumble over in the dark," comes another failure, namely: in the combination of forms. Even so gifted a sculptor as Rodin failed here; however beautiful his single forms may be, they are rarely well combined, as one may see who studies two of his most ambitious attempts, "The Burghers of Calais" and "The Gates of Hell." The significant combination of figures is of course a matter chiefly of instinct; no school can teach it. Either a sculptor has this instinct or he has not. But the failure to construct the component figures results logically in the failure to combine them; for the essential of good composition is that the lines and planes shall flow into one another in uninterrupted rhythm; and if there are no lines and planes to flow, there can of course be no rhythm. The tendency in grouping figures, therefore, was toward the static; a tendency to which the plunging steeds of Mr. MacMonnies or Mr. Shrady constitute no exception. There is action, plenty of it, in Mr. MacMonnies's "Horse Tamers" or the equestrian group from Mr. Shrady's Grant Monument; but there is no movement because there is no rhythm. Compare these

groups with the wonderful horsemen of the frieze of the Parthenon. Here too is action; the sense of movement does not derive from it, however, but from the marvelous rhythm that flows through the figures of the moving procession. An even better illustration of this independence of movement from action may be had by taking a group of immobile or nearly immobile figures. In the "Death of the Virgin" at Chartres, there is almost no action among the group of figures around the death-bed. Yet there is that flow of the lines and planes which gives the composition a finely rhythmical movement. I am tempted to offer one more comparison. The Shaw memorial brought Saint-Gaudens much praise from critics who saw in "the wave-like rhythmic momentum" of the marching soldiers "a suggestion of the slow but irresistible grinding of the mills of God." But this "wave-like rhythmic momentum" is exactly what Saint-Gaudens, in spite of his magnificent opportunity, did not achieve, as any one may see who compares this very respectable work with a Greek or Assyrian bas-relief of a similar theme. If the comparison be regarded as unfair, I can only say that when greatness has been attributed to an artist's work, as it has been attributed to this work of Saint-Gaudens, then the only way to determine the justice of the claim is by comparison with the best that has been achieved in his field of art.

The sculptor was even more liable than the painter to infection from the miasma of sentimentality that hung over the official and popular art of the period. If he wished to execute public commissions or important private commissions for fountains, memorials, and the like, it was not enough that his designs be beautiful; they must symbolize emotions or ideals or be susceptible of inter-

pretation as illustrations of moral, literary, or religious themes. That is to say, the committee or the patron for whom the sculptor worked must have the sculpture made intelligible in literary terms, in moral terms, in religious terms; in any, indeed, save æsthetic terms. If it acceptably fulfilled this requirement, in a workmanlike technique, it was considered good sculpture, however inept and feeble it might be. This was all very well, if the sculptor could start with a sculptural idea, and add a poetic or allusive title as an afterthought; but when he was called upon to start from a sentiment or a symbol, he was fortunate if he did not end by mouthing inanities. It was as easy to be inane in intimate art—the statuettes, either "cute" or humorous or sentimental, whose production was encouraged by school and public alike. It was also easy to be inane, or at least commonplace, in those portrait statues where the sculptor had to cope with a fashion of dress which concealed the contours of the body in men and distorted them in women. A few men—Saint-Gaudens, Warner, Niehaus—proved that even this problem could be solved in a distinguished way; but there is plentiful evidence of failure in the public statuary of our cities, and above all, perhaps, in that incredible collection of "favorite sons" in the National Capitol, which has become a sort of repository for sculptured ineptitudes.

Such were the opportunities of the sculptor, and his handicaps. Now and then, at the great fairs, or on such occasions as the public reception for Admiral Dewey, he had the chance to give his fancy free rein; to work in the spirit of holiday. This spirit, brought to bear upon work frankly decorative in purpose, has helped to give a gayly festive appearance to the great pylons and arches, the fountains and façades that sculptors have been called

upon to ornament. Not only such professional decorative sculptors as Bitter, Konti, and Martiny found employment at Chicago, Buffalo, and the Dewey celebration, and later at St. Louis, Portland, and San Francisco. The more serious sculptors have not hesitated to take active part, and they have proved themselves quite equal to the occasion. The great fairs, in which architects, sculptors, and painters have co-operated to create settings suited to the holiday spirit, have been on the whole successful in a decorative way, with their great buildings surmounted by restless groups and figures, their extravagant and fantastic sculptured fountains, their painted domes and pavilions. It goes without saying, of course, that these great fairs, from the Centennial exposition on down, have been of great advantage as points of contact between the public and both artists and artisans.

But these gala occasions have been rare, and in between them the sculptors must depend upon the Congress, the legislatures, memorial societies, clubs, and private patrons for employment. The most successful sculptor of the period, and the most famous, was Augustus Saint-Gaudens, lately returned from Paris at the time of the rift between the academicians and the younger men, and an original member of the Society of American Artists. In his youth he had been apprenticed to a cutter of cameos. Later he had studied at the Beaux-Arts and in Italy. He was one of the artists whom La Farge called upon for help in the decoration of Trinity Church; but his first real opportunity came with a commission for the statue of Farragut which stands in Madison Square, New York. This excellent statue remains not only one of his most distinguished works, but one of the best public monuments in the country. It has none of that action without movement of which I have

spoken. The pose, on the contrary, is quiet; the figure is well constructed; the feet are placed somewhat widely apart, as becomes a man accustomed to maintain his balance on the deck of a rolling ship. The right arm hangs at the side; the left hand lifts the binoculars. The skirts of the coat flutter slightly, as if blown by the breeze. The face and head are finely characterized, and the expression of alert concentration repeats and emphasizes that in the posture of the figure. The whole effect is one of energy in repose. The base of the monument, devised in collaboration with Stanford White, deserves especial mention since it was the first of the exedras that are to be found today wherever in this country there are public monuments. It is admirably proportioned, and the figures which decorate it show at its best the sculptor's talent for relief.

This statue marked the beginning of a long career devoted largely to the execution of public works. Saint-Gaudens became in a sense the official sculptor of his period, and his influence upon American monumental art has been profound and on the whole beneficial. More than any one else, he taught the artists and the public the importance of a proper setting for monumental sculpture; he raised the standard of lettering on monumental works by the excellent method of setting a good example; and he demonstrated the value of dignity and repose—the "General Logan" is exceptional among his works in its "fiery" treatment, and by no means his most successful statue. He was of the school, and he remained of the school. There is nothing strikingly original or forceful in his work. But he is of the school at its best. Having recognized the importance of his contribution, one may perhaps say, without suspicion of carping, that he was not at his happiest when he essayed the "ideal."

Mr. Taft finds in the "Victory" which leads General Sherman to triumph "a spiritual quality which enters into few works of this era," and compares it in a rather dithyrambic passage with the "Nike" of Samothrace, somewhat, one feels, to the disadvantage of the Greek masterpiece. To a more dispassionate eye this winged damsel, with her uplifted arm and vehement expression, appears as singularly ineffectual as she is inappropriate. One's impression is not so much that she is leading the general to victory as that she is holding up the traffic for him to pass; an impression which may arise partly from one's association of the familiar gesture with the crowded thoroughfare that the statue faces. But this is not the worst. The figure has not a single sculptural line; the want of body inside the pseudo-classic drapery conveys the impression that the uplifted arm is stuck on rather than raised by the shoulder muscles, and the same lack leaves one to seek in vain the logic of her rather awkward stride. The figure is neither "ethereal," as Mr. Taft calls it, nor is it sculptural, although it must in truthfulness be said that it is not much less so than the statue it tends to obscure. The same figure, with or without wings, appears often in this sculptor's work. She floats, clad in her too ample draperies, over the heads of the marching soldiers and mounted officer of the Shaw memorial; she is the "Amor Caritas," with its corrugated dress and sugary expression; and she appears again in the caryatids that uphold the mantelpiece from the Vanderbilt mansion, an insubstantial creature who would want strength to support a tenth the weight with which the inconsiderate sculptor has burdened her. But if this "haunting ideal" of Saint-Gaudens does not transcend the banal in either conception or execution, the failure is redeemed by the dignity and the occasional strength of

his approach to the real. Both these qualities are in the "Farragut"; the "Lincoln," in Lincoln Park, Chicago, has the dignity if not so large a measure of the strength; the "General Sherman" has something of both, and so has the Shaw memorial—to cite only a few of his public monuments.

It would be unfair to leave this artist without some mention of that which is of all his works, perhaps, the most popular: the seated bronze figure of the Adams memorial in Rock Creek Cemetery, Washington, D. C.; if for no other reason, because it is this which may be cited as an exception to what has been said of his failure to make his ideal figures convincing or distinguished. It is impossible to say how much of the impressiveness of this figure comes from its unique and idyllic setting, in its hexagonal plot with the enclosing circle of evergreens; but that it is impressive, one cannot deny. Here are no fussy draperies; the ample enveloping robe is disposed in simple folds from whose shadows emerge the brooding face and the supporting right arm. It is the pose of concentration and of reverie. The face is neither empty nor sugary; if the conventionally classical features do not, perhaps, contain the mystery of omniscience that enthusiastic critics have read into them, they do wear an expression of profound, aloof, and melancholy self-communion that gives the spectator something of the feeling of an intruder. One must not think of the brooding madonnas of Michelangelo, or of that epic figure of "Night," whose every line is heavy with the tragedy of human fate. Rather, one may think of the qualities that one has already associated with the best work of Saint-Gaudens: of dignity, poise, strength, and, above all, sincerity.

One regrets that one cannot say as much of a sculptor

whose prestige has been second only to that of Saint-Gaudens. Mr. French is undoubtedly sincere both as man and as artist; yet one does not get an impression of sincerity from his works. One feels that they have been too carefully devised with an eye to edification. These Angels of Peace, these Wisdoms, Truths, and Integrities, each wearing a pseudo-classic costume and equipped with the proper symbols and expression; somehow they leave one unconvinced of anything except the banality of their conception and execution. They have no symbolic meaning in themselves, and thus, with all their noble titles and attributes, they are not noble. There is more nobility in one line of a Barye lion than in all of them together. The symbols and titles are unimportant, of course; that is, indeed, the whole point. There is no strength in the work, no structure; there are only suave and soapy surfaces, signifying nothing except the contours of the model. One longs for the relief of angularity, of brusquely defined planes—and one begins to understand, before this kind of realism, the revolt of the cubists and their salutary attempt to reduce art to the expression of the underlying geometrical forms.

One finds less that is false in such works of Mr. French as the colossal seated "Lincoln" of the Lincoln Memorial. The "Lincoln" is not strong—"strong" is a word one can hardly use in connection with Mr. French's work—but the artist's respect for his subject is evident in a simplicity and dignity to which he rarely attains. Compared with such feeble attempts as the "Alma Mater" at Columbia University, it seems almost excellent. The equestrian "Washington," produced in collaboration with Mr. Potter, is dignified too, in spite of its theatrical gesture. One may say as much of the bust of Richard Morris Hunt, which comes as near to being strong as anything of Mr.

SAINT-GAUDENS. Farragut

Madison Square, New York

Pennsylvania State Capitol, Harrisburg

French's that I have seen. The exedra that forms the setting, with its two ideal figures of the type Mr. Saint-Gaudens was so fond of, leaves something to be desired. On the whole, this sculptor's productions give the impression that his work itself does not inspire him so much as the sentiments he wishes to illustrate. He is no doubt sincere, as I have said; but instead of being sincerely artistic, he is sincerely sentimental, which is a very different thing.

Much the same thing may be said of Mr. Lorado Taft, who for years has been the leading sculptor of the Middle West, and who, through his work and his great prestige, has exercised a lamentable influence on the monumental art of that region. Mr. Taft's work shares plentifully in the exact and unconvincing naturalism of Mr. French's. That he shares also in Mr. French's sentimentality is abundantly evident not only in his own production but in his estimates of the production of others, in his amusingly written and æsthetically misleading *History of American Sculpture.*

One turns with relief from the work of these two prominent sculptors to that of a man who, if excellence were to be gauged quantitatively, would rank far below them. No impressive list of public commissions is associated with the name of Olin Levi Warner: a few portrait statues, a fountain, a pair of bronze doors, an ideal figure or two, a number of bas-reliefs of Indian heads, and a few fine portrait busts; these comprise almost his total production. But it is quality, fortunately, that makes an artist's work significant, and, judged by this standard, Olin Warner is entitled to a high rating among American sculptors. His bust of John Insley Blair, in the Metropolitan Museum, stands very near the examples of Saint-Gaudens's work—too near, indeed, for the advantage of

the more prominent sculptor, for its virility makes his work weak by comparison. Only the head of Farragut holds its own beside it; and as for those portraits in bas-relief in which Saint-Gaudens was by no means at his best, they seem by comparison even more conventional and lifeless than they really are.

Warner was one of the first Americans to study in Paris. He worked under Jouffroy at the Beaux-Arts, and like Weir was a friend of Bastien-Lepage. Perhaps Bastien's influence may have had something to do with his insistence upon working from life rather than the antique. His money running out, he entered Carpeaux's studio as a workman; and Carpeaux, impressed by his ability, invited him to remain as a student. He returned to America instead; and one wonders what the effect on his career would have been if he had accepted the offer of one of the best sculptors of the century. As it was, he did some excellent work. His portrait heads of Weir, Mrs. Warner, Colonel Wood, and others show a fine grasp of the structural significance of the head. They are strong, typical, and well characterized. His portrait statues have this same strength. Although in his ideal figures there appears a certain immaturity that makes one feel he might have gained much by remaining with Carpeaux, they have more distinction than one generally associates with such works of the period. The one door that he completed for the Library of Congress, compared with any one of Mr. French's for the Boston Public Library, will illustrate this difference in quality—a difference, of course, in the quality of mind of the two sculptors.

The influence of Rodin is strong in the work of Mr. George Grey Barnard, who first attained prominence in 1894, when an exhibition of his works in Paris met with

sensational success. Mr. Barnard, like Rimmer before him, has the sculptor's feeling for the stone; and this has perhaps helped to save him from that overindulgence in surface modeling which vitiates the work of so many sculptors who have felt the influence of Rodin. If his famous group "The Two Natures" is not quite so strong as it pretends to be, and if it leans a bit too obviously on Rodin, it is sculptural and bears the imprint of his knowledge of his material. "The Hewer" is even better in these respects. The two groups that flank the entrance to the Pennsylvania State Capitol are illustrative—symbolic, rather—the one of "The Burden of Life," the other of "Brotherly Love and Work." One may note that Mr. Barnard had the courage to employ nude figures in these monumental groups, a practice still rare in our monumental sculpture; and that if he failed to attain that architectural quality which is his ideal, the failure is due less to the treatment of the single figures than to their combination. One feels that a happier composition would have given the groups somewhat less the effect of being huddled together and more the effect of an organic whole. One feels too that the sculptor, in leaving so much unhewn stone in their midst, has rather complicated his problem than successfully solved it.

The "Lincoln" which aroused such bitter controversy does not fall short in construction so much as in conception. At the time, Mr. Barnard was accused of the pathetic fallacy; and he appears to have been guilty. Having attempted to present Lincoln as "the man of sorrows"—a popular conception in which there is much of the same fallacy—he succeeded rather in making him look ill-nourished and unkempt. It is not a long step from this order of sentimentality to the sentimentality of Mr. French's "Washington," with his piously uplifted

sword. But Mr. Barnard's ability to construct saves him from the sheerly commonplace. The gaunt, grotesque figure stands firmly on its huge feet—indeed, one has a bit the feeling that they are weights to anchor it to its base—and with all its carefully planned awkwardness it has a certain impressiveness. This sculptor is now at work on a large memorial arch, to be called "Democracy," which is to be composed of two groups, on one side of war refugees, on the other of soldiers, marching up a rainbow. Perhaps the quality of the sculpture will transcend the bathos of the conception, but Mr. Barnard has set himself a large handicap to overcome. It is too soon for any final estimate of his work. That he has great ability there is no denying. Whether he has always put it to the happiest uses is another question. Perhaps future critics will see him as an original talent whose originality sometimes led him into the fantastic; or they may see him as an able workman who poured the current sentimentalities of his time into the mould supplied by Rodin. Time—and perhaps Mr. Barnard's memorial arch—will tell.

Among other sculptors of the period one may mention Charles Niehaus, who studied in Munich and Rome, and whose small figures, "Cæstus" and "The Scraper" show a strength in handling the nude figure which one rarely meets with among the sculptors of the time. His portrait statue of Hahnemann, in Washington, is one of the best of the period; and the same thing may be said of his "Garfield" in Cincinnati. The figure of "The Driller," on a monument at Titusville, Pennsylvania, shows that same power in dealing with the nude that is evident in the smaller works cited above. The California sculptor, Douglas Tilden, shows the same delight as Niehaus in athletic nude figures, and his audacious and somewhat

The Modern Classical Revival. Cret. Indianapolis Public Library

Photograph by Leroy L. Roseleeve

The Skyscraper. ROGERS: The New York Medical Centre

bizarre "Mechanics' Fountain" in San Francisco gives evidence of his ability to treat them realistically if with no great sculptural power. I have already mentioned Frederick MacMonnies as a sculptor of restless groups. Mr. MacMonnies has a technique which enables him to do about anything he likes. Unfortunately what he likes is usually bizarre or whimsical and unredeemed by distinction of conception or treatment. Another sculptor who executed many important commissions with a sure technique and a somewhat less sure taste was Paul Weyland Bartlett. These sculptors were victims of that tendency toward anatomical realism which it was difficult for the artist of their period to escape; and the quality of their work is perhaps to be ascribed as much to the influence which vitiated so much sculpture of their time as to any failure of their own.

The American Indian continued to exert upon sculptors the fascination he had had for Brown and Ward. Warner, during a Western trip, modeled a fine series of Indian heads in bas-relief. Bartlett occasionally made use of the Indian theme. Another man who has found inspiration in it is Hermon A. MacNeil. Although this sculptor has executed important public commissions, the best known of his works, and one of the best, is "The Sun Vow," a realistic presentation of an old Indian who watches the flight of an arrow from the bow of a boy who leans against his knee. John Boyle found his happiest expression in the treatment of Indian themes; and Solon Borglum and Alexander Proctor, when they introduced figures into their groups, usually chose to represent Indians. These two men, however, belong rather among sculptors of animals, and their best work belongs in the category of animal sculpture. Other men who won reputation in this field were Edward Kemeys and Edward C.

Potter. Kemeys was almost the first American sculptor of animals, and one of the best. Mr. Potter is especially known for his horses, which show much knowledge of anatomy and little of structure. It may be noted that those complacent lions which guard the entrance to the New York Public Library are his work.

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It is impossible, of course, to mention all of those sculptors who were doing professional work during the period, just as it has been impossible to mention all of the painters. The time is past when a history of the arts in America can be written after the manner of Dunlap, who made his book a history of all those American architects, engravers, painters, and sculptors concerning whom he could gather any information. The field has so greatly widened since Dunlap's day that a "book of the artists" must necessarily take the form of Mr. Mantle Fielding's valuable *Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors and Engravers.* The person who attempts the history of art must necessarily content himself with a discussion of tendencies, and of those artists whose work seems most important in the development of art.

A discussion of the last quarter of the century in American art would be incomplete which did not include some mention of the development of illustration. The period was one of remarkable improvements in the methods of illustration, improvements which made it possible to reproduce the most delicate drawings without that loss of the quality of line which the earlier woodcuts had involved. Many artists of the period were also illustrators, and among those who devoted their talents chiefly or exclusively to illustration, two or three deserve especial mention. Edwin A. Abbey's work was chiefly

historical, and entirely in the tradition of the English school, whose emphasis on the literary and historical in subject had influenced him even before he settled in England. He was careful to re-create as accurately as possible the historical setting and costume in the scenes he depicted; and he set an excellent example for other illustrators by his practice of working from the model. Among the best known and the best of his works are his illustrations, for Harper and Brothers, of the *Comedies of Shakespeare*. Some of his illustrations for the works of Goldsmith also deserve mention for their charming humor and excellent characterization. His later years were largely given over to mural work, of which I shall speak later. A B. Frost's illustrations were quite the opposite of Abbey's in that they were contemporary and American, even sectional. In his illustrations of the life of the Middle West he became in a measure the graphic historian of the period in that section of the country, as Eakins, in his paintings, recorded the spirit of the Eastern section. He was also one of the best comic artists this country has produced. Frederick Remington may be mentioned for his vivacious if somewhat photographic illustrations of the life of the Indian and the cowboy, and Charles Dana Gibson for his well-known portrayal of the American girl. Otto Bacher and Joseph Pennell were illustrators as well as etchers; but of all Pennell's works, perhaps those for which he most deserves to be known are his fine lithographs of the building of the Panama Canal, which are singularly free from the fussiness which mars his etching. Timothy Cole deserves mention in any discussion of American illustration for those remarkable wood engravings from the old masters which brought him an international reputation.

The increasing artistic activity that marked the end

of the century was by no means confined to the graphic and plastic arts. The Centennial Exposition aroused a new interest not only in painting and sculpture, but in the industrial arts; an interest signalized by the founding of the School of Industrial Art in Philadelphia in that same year. This example has been followed by the opening of such schools in every important city, and the rather general introduction into the secondary schools of instruction in drawing and in some branches of handicraft. The new interest in industrial art was stimulated also by the revival of craftsmanship which was an aspect of the English pre-Raphaelite movement, and with which the name of William Morris is chiefly associated—a revival which served chiefly to emphasize the impossibility of solving a nineteenth-century problem in eighteenth-century terms. Architecture, too, which had been so long in the doldrums, began to put forth a new growth, conditioned by influences which will be discussed in another chapter. And with the revival of architecture and the construction of monumental buildings came that demand for decorative work which was met by Hunt, La Farge, Saint-Gaudens, and others. Much of this work belongs to the last quarter of the century, but it seems more convenient to discuss it later, in connection with that of recent years.

Of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, perhaps the most significant fact is that both painters and sculptors were still obliged to escape the poverty of the American environment by turning to Europe, especially to France, as the artists of the preceding period had turned to Düsseldorf, Paris, and Rome, and those of the Colonial and early Republican periods to England. Even those who did not go to Europe felt its influence—as Winslow Homer felt that of the French artists of 1830 through the

HIBBEN. Arthur Jordan Group, Butler University

WRIGHT — Residence of Aline Barnsdall, Los Angeles

Photograph by Geo. V. Todd

lithographs from their works. The chief result of the artistic poverty which forced them to depend on foreign teaching, was the less complete expression which a late maturity involves. In the sculpture of the period, and in its painting if one except the work of two or three men, this incompleteness is evident in the want of the style which characterizes the work of artists who are at home in a great tradition—that elusive quality which La Farge defined as "a living form which the live spirit wraps around itself." Style implies authority; and authority is possible only to the person who is sure of himself and his medium of expression. Yet American art had made great progress since the beginning of the century. Because of its handicaps, it would be unfair to judge it absolutely. If one consider it in relation to those forces which retarded American cultural development—the forces of materialism and greed which diverted the amazing energy of the American people to spoliation, speculation and industrial development—if one consider it in relation to these forces, then the measure in which American artists had overcome their handicaps by the end of the century appears in the light of a wholly admirable achievement.

Chapter Eight

The Era of Confusion

THE third quarter of the nineteenth century, so prosperous for the Hudson River school and the Italianate sculptors, and so discouraging for the few artists who were struggling toward better things, was marked in architecture by confusion and vulgarity. The reasons were much the same as those which accounted for the triviality of graphic and plastic art: want of knowledge and a sound tradition. The architecture of the period was, indeed, an accurate reflection of its material wealth and cultural poverty. Not that wealth was a common possession. There was a class of genteel poor—professional folk and salaried workers—and a larger and growing one, in the industrial centers, of abject and helpless poor, chiefly recruited in constantly augmenting number from the exploited masses of Europe. Unrestrained spoliation of the country's resources was beginning, even before the equalizing influence of the frontier had vanished, to result in the inevitable extremes of wealth and poverty. None the less, the general level of well-being was much higher than in Europe, where for centuries the close monopoly of land by a small owning class had enforced a comfortless overcrowding of the dispossessed. This condition was rapidly coming to prevail in the larger American cities

—there were tenements in New York as early as 1835. But the open towns and villages of America, where even the poorest cottage had its bit of land for lawn and garden, reflected a higher standard of living among the poorer classes than was possible to the landless proletarians of European countries.

It was a raw civilization, however, that had resulted from the scrapping of all cultural traditions in the universal race for gain. Where acquisition is the criterion of success, ostentation is its fitting symbol. The architect of the period labored under a double handicap: that of the general ignorance, which he shared, and that of the prevailing vulgarity, to which he was obliged to cater; and architecture was further degraded by the speculative building and selling that accompanied the growth of the industrial centres and boom-towns—a condition (need it be said?) that is perhaps more general today than it was then.

Considering the ignorance and the vulgarity, it is not surprising that when one looks through the books of architects' designs that were published around 1850, one finds a rare array of Italian villas, old English cottages, Swiss chalets, Anglo-Norman and even Persian and Indian houses, none of which shows more than a bowing acquaintance with the style it is supposed to represent. The Greek fashion was passing; therefore one finds only an occasional "Anglo-Greek" villa. The French style of the Third Empire was just coming in, and the mansard roofs which later became so popular are also rare. But "Swiss," "oldest English," "Tudor," and "Norman" villas are shown in abundance. There are also "bracketed villas"—and one wonders why the distinction, since villas in every so-called style flaunted as many brackets as there were places to put them. Indeed, it was a period of

gimcracks, and no part of the exterior to which gimcracks could be conveniently attached was left unmolested. Since hard woods were still plentiful and cheap, there was no economic restraint upon the taste for elaborate wooden trimmings. "Eave-boards," cut out by the jig saw in fantastic open-work designs, wept from the overhanging eaves, and those same eaves were adorned by as many brackets as there was room for. They were frequently surmounted, in addition, with saw-toothed parapets. In the Anglo-Norman villas the roof line was broken by towers, crenelated or topped with peaked roofs. The numerous balconies and piazzas displayed the same ornamental gewgaws. Even the chimneys were surmounted with writhing stacks. In one of his books Andrew Downing shows "chimney-shafts in the old English style which may be had in artificial stone at Gibson's in New York." Out of the welter of illiterate adaptation, two salient facts emerge: that the dream of romanticism, as reflected in American architecture, was something of a nightmare; and that the superabundant ornamentation offered the speculative builder magnificent opportunities to conceal bad workmanship.

For that the spirit which animated this extraordinary architecture was romantic, there is no question. And as English romanticism had turned with a nostalgic gesture toward the Middle Ages, so did American romanticism. Rarely does one find, among the numerous "styles" in these old books, one that does not bear somewhere upon its agonized façade a detail vaguely reminiscent of the Gothic. If the spirit of mediæval architecture eluded American architects, it also eluded English architects; and if the American imitation of the shell was ignorant and vulgar, it was only more so than in England, and that because American architects had little

opportunity to study the originals. American romanticism was by force of circumstances one more remove from these than English romanticism; it was an imitation of an imitation. As for the bad workmanship, there was much of it, no doubt; yet with all their jig-sawed arabesques and artificial stone, many of these houses were well built, and even in their detail retained touches of sound craftsmanship. Dozens of them still stand, in the older sections of our cities, their masonry or wooden siding and all their fussy trimmings bravely withstanding time and the elements, interesting and often picturesque survivals from a time when bad taste, if no worse than it is at present, was at least a more common possession.

The plans were as varied and almost as tortured as the façades. The interior trim bore the same ornamental gewgaws. In his *Architecture of Country Houses,* published in 1850, Downing shows interiors in the Grecian, Italian, Gothic, Norman, and bracketed styles, and gives many hints on the proper kind of furniture, vases, draperies, and wall paper. The interiors, in spite of brackets, pendants, and fretted carving, are much simpler than those of succeeding years, when that "ingenious mode of carving by machinery," which had lately been introduced when Downing wrote his book, had come into general use. Downing's designs, indeed, are somewhat less fantastic than those of his contemporaries, and postulate good workmanship.

On Staten Island there is an old house of brick and stucco superbly situated overlooking the Narrows and the sea. It is by Renwick, who built St. Patrick's Cathedral and Grace Church, and it is a good eample of what this American domestic Gothic could be in the hands of a man who knew how to handle it with some restraint. The plan is typical: the great rooms ramble around an

octagonal hall, which rises through the second story. The interior is simple. Door and window openings are encased in simple mouldings forming pointed arches. Under the paint which has been added, the woodwork is of black walnut. Instead of mullioned casements there are the plate-glass windows that the making of glass in large sheets had made possible and popular. The towers surrender their mediæval character to an invasion of these windows. The house is full of incongruities; none the less it must have been an imposing mansion in its time, and even in its decay it has a certain dignity.

Downing also provides designs for furniture in the Grecian, Gothic, Louis XIV, Elizabethan, and Romanesque styles, which must be seen to be appreciated—and which furnish an interesting reminder that the fad for "period" furniture is by no means exclusively modern. Two articles which he presents as of recent vogue are the whatnot and the ottoman, both of which were important items of interior decoration for the next thirty years. Although here and there one of his designs recommends itself by its simplicity and just proportion, and although in extravagance they are not to be compared with the enormities of the period after the Civil War, for the most part the shapes are ill devised, the ornament illiterate and grotesque, precisely as in modern machine-made travesties of modes which owed their grace and beauty to the loving work of a vanished race of craftsmen.

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During the Civil War there was little building. When the war was over, the acquisitive spirit was more than ever in the ascendency, with even greater opportunities for gratification. The war destroyed the landed aristocracy of the South and entrenched the Northern financial

and industrial interests. This triumph was soon reflected in the growth of monopolistic industrial corporations, subsidized through protective tariffs or by more direct means, such as the princely grants of land and money which the Federal government showered upon the companies building the transcontinental railways. It was reflected also in feverish speculation in real estate, and in financial operations of unprecedented scope, by no means devoid of the speculative element. Empire-building was a going concern until wildcat speculation culminated in the panic of 1873; and its rewards were enormous. While Americans had plenty of wealth to display, therefore, and plenty of desire to display it, they lacked the leisure and taste to display it in any better way than that of vulgar show.

The war saw the end of the Greek revival. In its place the French style of the Empire emerged, to contest the field of architecture with romanticism. This, meanwhile, had received from England a new impetus in the mediævalism preached by Ruskin and the pre-Raphaelites. "The Victorian Gothic in its pantalettes," to use Louis Sullivan's descriptive term, reflected Ruskin's Italian bias in its polychrome and its Italian detail. Bad enough in its original habitat—*vide* the Albert Memorial—it inspired in America many doubtfully Gothic buildings characterized by what the architects firmly believed to be an Italian use of vari-colored stone, terra cotta medallions, and short columns with florid capitals. It became the fashionable style for churches, and it was adopted for such temples of art as the Pennsylvania Academy, the old Boston Museum, and the National Academy of Design—with its great stairway surrounded by pointed arches on granite columns which darkened the corridors where the pictures of the "younger men" were hidden,

to their great indignation. The most ambitious example of the mode, and the best, was Memorial Hall at Harvard, by Ware and Van Brunt, with its great auditorium spanned by the wooden vaulted and ribbed ceiling familiar to those who know the great halls at Westminster, Hampton Court, and the Temple.

There was no classic serenity in the classicism of the Third Empire as dimly reflected in America. There was little in the original works, indeed, save in those of Labrouste. Garnier's showy Opéra, from which American architects derived most of their meager knowledge of the French style, is "explosive" rather than serene, to use Mr. Tallmadge's excellent descriptive word. In America this style, lacking the power to be explosive, was fussy and ostentatious, like the contemporary Gothic work. The State War and Navy Building in Washington, which rears its tortured orders at one side of the White House in dramatic contrast with the quiet Greek façade of Mills's Treasury at the other, is a typical example of this pseudo-French, pseudo-classic architecture. The old New York Post Office is another; and they could be multiplied indefinitely. In domestic architecture the typical features were tall stories, cupolas, and mansard roofs with dormer windows either plain or flanked by garlanded pillars or strange-looking consoles and surmounted by equally strange cartouches. The same incredible detail overspread the whole façade—when it was not mingled with the chamfered posts, brackets, and oriels of the "Gothic" style. What better could one expect of a generation of architects obliged to eke out with their wits their ignorance of modes as much in demand as they were misunderstood?

Architecture would perhaps never have sunk to such a level of abasement, if the long years of slavish and

Photograph by P. A. Nyholm

SAARINEN. The Cranbrook Foundation

Photograph by Ewing Galloway

GOODHUE. The Los Angeles Public Library

ignorant copying from alien modes had not effectually stifled the voice of common sense. But all idea of any essential relation between form and function had long since been lost, and so had all idea of the honest use of materials. Hence those cast-iron fronts of the period, anchored to the masonry behind, which permitted of a cheap and endless repetition of classic or Gothic detail. To a generation bent upon having what it considered an elegant effect, the way in which the effect was to be attained was a matter of indifference. In a house that merely pretended to be French or Gothic, what matter if wood or iron pretended to be stone, iron or tin to be wood? When the whole was make-believe, one could hardly look for concern with honesty in the parts.

The interiors of the period were as restless as the façades, and more uniformly so. Halls and rooms, whether in city or country houses, were high and narrow. In those cities where the gridiron plan—that godsend to the speculator in land values—had resulted in the long and narrow lot sold by the front foot, there were rows of long and narrow houses, depressingly alike, with dark inner rooms. Ceilings were beamed and bracketed or of plaster with rosettes from which hung the chained and scalloped gas fixtures. Cornices were of plaster or of wood—often several kinds, or painted in several colors. No bit of the woodwork but was fretted into fantastic shapes by the jig saw. The mantel shelves, if of wood, were supported by weirdly elaborate consoles, pillars, or brackets, flanking the tiles which surrounded the fireplace. They were not always of wood, however. Often the whole chimney-piece was of plain slabs of marble, with a rounded opening furnished with a basket grate. Floors were of soft wood, and entirely covered by carpets, until near the end of the period, when Oriental

rugs came into fashion. After that they were likely to be bordered with an inlay in several kinds of wood.

John Locke Eastlake's book, *Household Taste,* exerted a strong influence on furnishing and decoration. To him may be traced the incised carving (wheat was a favorite motif), the inlaid tiles in wainscoting and even in the doors of sideboards and cupboards, the heavy furniture in what was supposed to be Gothic style, and the rage for open shelves. Eastlake's book was a protest against dishonest workmanship and ostentatious bad taste—against the "monstrous designs which neither in spirit nor letter realize the character of mediæval art . . . showy in their general effect and usually overlaid with meretricious ornament." What he objected to was precisely the sort of thing that was done in his name. The enormous beds with their overarching headpieces, the heavy tables with jig-sawed skirts, the sideboards topped by irregularly placed shelves, sometimes surmounted by pointed arches, the cumbersome chairs with their brackets and finials; all these were thought to be "Eastlake." His misinterpreted teaching was more than anything else responsible for the open-shelf motif which dominated the interiors of the time. In addition to the ubiquitous whatnot, there were sets of bracketed shelves to hang on walls; there were little separate shelves, supported by brackets and adorned by vases. Queer little shelves were suspended over mantelpieces and were draped—there is no other word—around windows. In a design for an interior of the period, Barye's "Minerva" rides precariously atop a fragile-looking pedestal provided with open shelves! Often these shelves had the same little sawtooth skirts as the tables, and always they were loaded with china, bronzes, shells, and miscellaneous knick-knacks. Fans and artificial flowers were much in favor

for this purpose, and peacock feathers, too, were not uncommon.

These folk were not afraid of color. They used wall papers of insistent design, or they painted their walls—"warm yellow," perhaps "subdued with a dash of green," with the cornice a "broad band of rosy color, above and below which are mouldings of green." Or the dado might have touches of red and black (I speak of the really fine houses), and the wall above it might be Pompeiian red with dull borders. Or a row of crimson tile might be inlaid in the black walnut wainscoting, and above this the wall might bear, on a leather-colored ground, a design of green parrots, green leaves, and black grapes; the whole set off by crimson silk curtains and portières bordered with black velvet. Again, the wall paper might be of gold and dull green with a dark red border "lightened with a procession of squirrels." One enterprising housekeeper is praised by a writer of the time for having painted on the wall of her parlor all the flowers of all the seasons, gracefully spreading from jardinières.

One must not forget that this was the period of the Hudson River men and the Italianates, and of many copies from old masters. I know one ambitious collection from that time, chiefly of fairly good copies from Botticelli, Ghirlandajo, Raphael, Veronese, with one or two small originals and many fine engravings. There are marbles also, among which Randolph Rogers's "Lost Pleiad" holds the place of honor; and there is a large mosaic of St. Peter's, whose sole merit lies in the curious fact that it weighs an unbelievable number of pounds, and that the wall had to be reinforced to support it. This collection belonged to a man of wealth. But wealthy men by no means always preferred copies of old pictures, or

even the originals. They paid high prices for American works. In every home that made any pretensions to culture, the walls were hung with paintings and engravings, the shelves adorned with busts and statuettes. The Venus of Milo, in all sizes, was the great popular favorite. Either she or an Italianate marble might stand on a pedestal in the bay window, and perhaps a Rogers group would share one of the mantel shelves with the vases and shells.

It was a bit exuberant, this way of decorating; there is no doubt of that. But it had the virtue of expressing the people who lived in the house. They followed the fashion, to be sure, but they were less self-conscious about it than those modern home-makers who call in the interior decorator to save them from making errors of taste—and their houses from remotely suggesting their own personalities. Nor was taste invariably bad, of course. It was simply rather generally bad. It would perhaps not be quite fair to leave the period without referring to the makeshifts by which the shabby genteel aped the wealthy genteel. Who that has known an aged lady in modest circumstances, does not remember how her wall was adorned with such remarkable objects as gilded frying pans? I remember one who with her own hand painted landscapes on pie tins, which decorate her parlor to this day. Who has not seen gilded toasters, tied together with ribbons and used to hold photographs; or gilded rolling pins adorned with bands of velvet, and fitted with screws on which to hang keys and button-hooks; or the series of wire loops that took the place of the bracketed shelves in holding papers or photographs?

Who, indeed, has not seen the houses which enshrined the incredible treasures of that time? They are usually divided now, in the city, into apartments where, if the

Courtesy of Eugene Schoen, Inc.

Twentieth Century Interior. By EUGENE SCHOEN

Courtesy of the Montross Gallery

POOR. Pottery

Courtesy of the Feragil Gallery

DIEDERICH. Fire Screen

changes have not been too thoroughgoing, one may prefer to live rather than in more convenient modern apartments all built alike and all for profit. At their worst they have more dignity than these. But their heyday is past. Gone are the flowered Brussels carpets that waged perpetual war with the gilded and flowered wall paper; gone the shelves and whatnots with their array of curious objects; gone the fans and peacock feathers and wax or paper flowers; gone too the thin landscapes, the sentimental genre pieces, the photographic portraits, the copies of Old Masters, the Italian marbles, and the Rogers groups. Yet if one lives (as I do) near one of those auction rooms which are among our most interesting urban institutions, one occasionally sees them there in all their tarnished and discarded glory: the ornate furniture; the trivial and sentimental pictures, the feeble, mercilessly chiseled marbles; all the tasteless bric-a-brac that cluttered the open shelves. One wonders whence they came and to what limbo of dead fashions they will vanish.

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The Centennial Exposition of 1876 impressed upon American minds that artistically all was not for the best in the best of possible countries. The unavoidable comparison between foreign and American exhibits in the fine and industrial arts was all in favor of the former. Knowing the quality of European academic art, knowing the taste of Mid-Victorian England and the contemporary French bourgeois (it was no better in other European countries), one cannot doubt that many of these foreign exhibits were fairly bad. Good or bad, nevertheless, they were better in design and workmanship than anything America could show. The result was that the exodus of

art students to Europe was stimulated, and American schools of design increased in number.

The Exposition was an ambitious affair, with 249 buildings, arranged with little regard for order and convenience. One of these, Memorial Hall, remains in Fairmount Park as a permanent monument to the bad "French taste" of the period. It is now a museum, and those who visit it may also visit the Centennial by the simple means of descending the basement stairs. For in the basement is a complete model of the fair, with all its buildings great and small—the Main Exhibits Building which, the old guard will assure them, was 1876 feet long, one foot for every year A.D.; Machinery Hall, almost as large and even uglier; and all the lesser buildings which huddled behind these monsters and were themselves monstrous in everything but size. The mansards and cupolas of the French style shared the honors of the exposition with the mélange of debased classical and debased Gothic which was known as "Queen Anne." The result in either case was ugly, and merited the severe and salutary strictures of the foreign visitors. The ugliness was, indeed, a blessing in disguise. It was fortunate that the architects of the Exposition overlooked the obvious opportunity to take as their model the sturdy Georgian vernacular of Independence Hall, as architects thirty years later would perhaps have done. The ten million Americans who passed the turnstiles had an opportunity to judge of American arts exactly as they were, and to compare them with the arts of countries which preserved, even though in a somewhat enfeebled condition, the traditions handed down by centuries of craftsmen and builders. Nor was the comparison with European arts alone; the displays of Oriental countries gave opportunity to judge of the works of wholly foreign

cultures, and made a profound impression upon American minds.

We have seen that the turning to Europe which marked the last quarter of the century—and which the Centennial did its share to stimulate—improved the quality of American painting and sculpture and narrowed the range of opportunity for American artists. Architecture was not slow to feel the influence of the new orientation; but the results here were conditioned, as we shall see, by its close relation to the economic and social life. It will be remembered that the significant American artists of the period were those who repudiated the narrow formalism of the Beaux-Arts and the studios that pursued its methods. The same thing was true in architecture. The two men who stand out as the most important figures in American architecture during the period had both tried the methods of the Beaux-Arts, and found them wanting. Both, after their return to America, declared their independence of the school. But here the resemblance ceases. For where the one turned to the past, the other faced the future. The work of Henry Hobson Richardson represented the last stand of American romanticism. There was something romantic, too, in Louis Sullivan's belief in the "abounding power" of man to build a great democratic civilization; but there was nothing nostalgic about it. A man with this faith cannot turn to the past; for it is only in the future that man can continue to create. Louis Sullivan therefore became, by force of his exuberant faith—a faith which links him with Whitman—the prophet of a new era.

Sullivan, however, was much younger than Richardson. He was barely twenty at the time of the Centennial. The man who shared the primacy in American architecture with Richardson from the time of the Centennial

to the Columbian Exposition in 1893, was Richard Morris Hunt, brother of William Morris Hunt, first American graduate of the Beaux-Arts, a man whose culture and European education gave him prestige with the parvenus of his day, and whose strength of character enabled him to have his way in carrying out his designs. He had returned from Europe in 1855 and opened an office in New York; but he did not remain long in America. It was not until the 'seventies that he returned and took his place as architect to the plutocrats of the gilded age, for whom he built a series of great châteaux which re-created, in so far as thorough knowledge and unlimited funds could re-create it, the splendor of the feudal lords of France. The spirit which produced, in America, the vast and gorgeous town and country houses of the Astors, Vanderbilts, and others, did not differ from that which had dominated architecture during the third quarter of the century. In the one case as in the other it was the spirit of show, the innate human passion for conspicuous waste. Nor was the later expression less vulgar. But thanks to an able and well-schooled architect, it was vulgar in a different way. Hunt knew the châteaux from which he borrowed his designs; and his work was archæologically sound. Whether the showy balls and banquets of his patrons were held in ballrooms reminiscent of Francis I, or in banquet halls that recalled Louis XIV, in either case the carving and gilding and paneling were impeccably of the period they were supposed to represent. Hunt was an able architect. He was of the parvenu period both in time and by reason of his close association with its leading figures; but he saw to it that in architecture at least its ostentation should be, if not less vulgar, then at least less illiterate than it had been. With him began that period in American architecture of buildings

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

PUTNAM. Snarling Jaguar

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

EDITH WOODMAN BURROUGHS. John La Farge

which, as Mr. Mumford has well said, have all the virtues of the originals, except originality.

Thanks to him and those men who followed his lead, the excellence of American architecture for the past fifty years has been held by the pundits to reside chiefly in ingenious and precise plagiarism; and the cleverest plagiarists have been accounted the foremost architects. It is not placing an undue strain on one's imagination to compare this view and what has resulted from it with Benjamin West's view of painting, and its results. If West ever suspected that art "is a means of expressing the passion that is in the artist," he gave no sign of it. For him it existed as a medium of moral uplift; no passion in him responded to the passion in the masters he revered. Therefore he never penetrated deeper than the external aspects of their works, which he plundered indiscriminately for forms to combine into edifying compositions. Can one suspect that architect of passion to whom his art means accurate reproduction and clever adaptation of what other men have created; who goes to the great builders of the past, not to commune with their spirit but to study their effects in order that he may imitate them? He may be a man of great talent, as West certainly was; but his work, however able it may be, will have the disquieting effect of a thing that lacks complete conviction; it will be neither his own nor that of the masters he has imitated.

One wonders that a man of Richardson's ability and power should have turned to the Middle Ages for the forms that he used with such mastery—until one remembers that when he returned to America, "fresh from Beaux-Arts of the worst possible kind," as La Farge said, romantic mediævalism was at the zenith of its influence. Finding himself ill at ease in the fash-

ionable *pastiche* of the Victorian Gothic, he turned to the vigorous and brutal forms of the Romanesque; and finding them better suited to his own temperament he was soon convinced that the Romanesque was of all existing types that most nearly akin to the American spirit. There was a sense in which he was right. The privileged of that day were high-handed in their methods. Their control of government had not yet been legislated into indirection by reformers; and through governmental and extra-legal oppressions they were engaged in resisting the efforts of their exploited workers to unite in protective organizations. The period of Richardson's influence was the period of the great railway strike of 1877, of the Haymarket riot, of the strike at Homestead, and of various minor brushes between outraged laborers and radicals and official or unofficial representatives of the ruling plutocracy. Richardson's solid and frowning Romanesque courthouses, jails, churches, houses, and railway stations were symbolic of this aspect of American civilization. With all their romantic allusion, they symbolized the sinister power of the entrenched monopolists, as the romantic châteaux of Hunt symbolized their aspiration toward aristocratic refinement. The Pittsburgh courthouse and jail, and the great château at Biltmore—behold the two masks of American nineteenth-century feudalism.

The system of monopolistic ownership that created this feudal power provided its victims. As the steadily rising monopoly-value of land made farming unprofitable, men lost their freedom to choose whether they would work for masters in the mines and factories or labor the earth for themselves. The agricultural population, driven off the land by the exorbitant demands of the land monopolist, crowded into the industrial centers and thus

produced a congestion of population which, further augmented by the influx of foreign workers, forced wages down and land values up. This rapid, enforced urbanization of the American population, and the concentration of huge numbers in a few cities most advantageously situated for trade and manufacture, has vitally affected the American architecture of the past fifty years—has, indeed, more than any other cause, determined the direction of its development. In the period between the Centennial and the Columbian Exposition it produced, in contrast to the gilded magnificence of the owning class, appalling misery in the congested districts where the poor were forced by increasing rents and decreasing wages to put up with ever smaller quarters, and with a lack of light, air, water, sanitation, and privacy unparalleled in American history. The middle classes, too, began to feel the pinch. The "French flat" reflected the landlord's ability to demand more rent for less space. If this rent-producing innovation satisfied in an imperfect way the need of the urban middle class for housing, that fact was no concern of the landlord. The sociological aspects of overcrowding were not within his province. His interest was in collecting all that the traffic would bear.

This is a condition which is usually ignored by writers. In three histories of American architecture that I have before me, only one, that of Mr. Mumford, takes account of the plight of the middle and working classes. Mr. Mumford alone mentions the so-called dumb-bell tenement, which, by winning first prize in a model tenement-house competition in 1879, standardized all the worst features of tenement-house construction. From the other books one gleans the impression that domestic

architecture consists of the homes of the wealthy and the well-to-do. But if architecture is the art of housing human beings, then the lightless, airless, heatless tenements of our great cities, the more comfortable but often equally lightless and airless apartments of the middle class, and the hideous speculative building of the suburbs—innumerable rows of squalid, jerry-built houses —must be taken into account as a proof of American failure in the field of domestic architecture. That this failure is due to the economic system rather than the architects by no means alters the fact that it exists, and that the condition which accounts for it, far from being no concern of the architect, is of vital import for the future of his art.

Among the well-to-do who could still afford to build their own houses Richardson's influence was strong. Heavy round towers with conical roofs, arched doorways, and windows often too small and too few to light adequately the large rooms behind them, shared the favor of home builders with the Queen Anne style and that of the Colonial revival launched by McKim, Mead and White. Usually these dwellings were of brick or stone, like Richardson's, and shared the solidity of structure which marked his work. This is perhaps the reason why so many of them remain standing in the congested districts of our cities. They are expensive to raze. It is one proof of Richardson's genius that he was able to impose a standard of workmanship that made for permanence, precisely at a time when the rapid rise in urban land values stimulated the demand for buildings that could easily be torn down to make way for larger ones; at a time, too, when the increasing cost of building sites was forcing home builders to compensate their

outlay in this direction by reducing their building costs through flimsy construction and the use of cheap substitutes for the desired materials and fixtures. Richardson's own buildings, of whatever nature, were built with formidable solidity; and within the limits of the style that he adopted he achieved some noble results. His buildings are in general finely proportioned. In a period of gimcracks, the simplicity of his masses and his restraint in the use of ornament were nothing less than revolutionary. He enriched his façades by the use of contrasting materials, or by varying the surface treatment of a single material; or by the use of patterns, of rich carving in motifs suited to the heavy architectural forms, or of sculptures such as those of Bartholdi on the tower of the Brattle Street Church in Boston. His interiors were made colorful by the lavish use of marble, onyx, mosaic, brass, and fresco.

He became a powerful figure in American architecture; but notwithstanding his influence upon a host of followers and imitators, the Romanesque fashion was short-lived, and never became universal. Other students were returning from Beaux-Arts of the worst possible kind, and were beginning to make themselves felt. Classical forms were used with greater understanding. The English Queen Anne house, gabled and half-timbered, came into favor. In 1876 McKim, Mead, White, and Bigelow made a trip through New England, studied American houses of the Queen Anne period, and on their return launched the Colonial revival mentioned above. American architecture was still plundering the past; what chiefly distinguished it from that of the preceding period was that it did so with greater regard for archæological correctness.

Yet even this can be said only of the finer buildings. In the lesser houses one often sees a wayward mixture of styles and materials. Some dwellings of the time outvie the Dutch farmhouse of Colonial days in their mixture of stone, brick, shingles, siding, and stucco. Nor is it uncommon to find the half-timbered gables of Queen Anne combined with the round towers of Richardson—a hybrid which owed its genesis to the difficulty of attaining with wood the appearance of frowning solidity which was the earmark of the Romanesque. In detail, too, there was a general straying from the path of archæological rectitude. The marvels of the turning lathe replaced those of the jig saw; they appeared in the turned posts of the porte-cochères and wide porches that had become popular, and in the balusters, grilles, and screens of turned spindles that decorated the stairways and the arched openings of doors. To make matters worse, golden oak replaced the ash and walnut of the preceding period in the interior woodwork. The golden effect, it may be said, was achieved by filling, staining, and varnishing oak to a bright yellow. Beams, window and door casings, wainscoting, grilles, screens, floors, and even furniture were of this mistreated wood—a fashion for which an architect of my acquaintance has coined the excellent descriptive phrase, "early Pullman."

The bathroom had been an innovation of the preceding period—with long, deep, coffin-shaped tubs. In the house of the 'eighties a higher standard of comfort increased the number of bathrooms. Central heating had been devised before the Civil War, and thereafter became part of the standard equipment in the better houses. Plumbing, and the fixtures that accompanied it, were beginning to be important items in the cost of building.

Possibly because of the greater difficulty of heating high rooms, possibly to decrease the expense of building, possibly because of a mere change of fashion, ceilings were lower in the house of the 'eighties than during the preceding decade. Halls were wider. In furnishing, the most notable change, besides the introduction of golden oak, was the waning popularity of the whatnot. The ottoman retained its place in the household furnishings. I have not mentioned pianos, which about the middle of the century had replaced spinets, harpsichords, and the early pianofortes. Three styles had soon come into use—square, grand, and upright. In the 'eighties the square piano was discontinued. These early pianos were large instruments, and much better than the tiny ones that shrinking rooms have brought into fashion; for their greater length of string gave them much more resonance. They were almost exclusively of rosewood veneer until the 'nineties, when the growing scarcity of rosewood caused mahogany to be substituted. The legs were heavy and clumsy and enriched with florid carving, and lamp brackets and music racks too were often elaborately carved.

Photographs, sometimes tinted, tended to replace engravings on the walls. Oriental hangings, teakwood tables, and Chinese lacquered screens inlaid with mother of pearl attested the revival of interest in Oriental art that succeeded the Centennial. There was much use of stained glass windows. In Washington I lived for several years in a roomy house built during the period or shortly thereafter, which had three stained glass windows over the golden oak wainscoting above the stair landing, and a stained glass skylight above the second floor hall. Color was used in wall coverings, curtains, and rugs,

with the same profuseness as before, and the same disregard of harmony.

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The influence of Richardson dominated New England and the West, and was strong here and there in Southern cities. Washington has one or two houses by the great man himself, and many more that show his influence. Cleveland, Cincinnati, St. Louis followed his lead. But it was in Chicago that he found his most brilliant followers; and it was in Chicago that mediævalism fought its last and losing battle for the hegemony of American architecture.

During the 'eighties Chicago was increasing in population and prosperity with almost incredible swiftness. In the early days it had been chiefly a market for grain, lumber, and live-stock. "It may be assumed," says Louis Sullivan, in his *Autobiography of an Idea,* "that in the cultural system prevailing in those days of long ago, the butcher stood at the peak of social eminence, while slightly below him were ranged the overlords of grain, lumber, and merchandising. Of manufacturing, so called, there was little, and the units were scattering and small." By 1880 all this was changed. The city had become the center of a system of railways radiating to the four points of the compass; the butchers remained and their unpleasant business grew enormously in volume; so likewise with the overlords of grain and merchandising. In addition there came the overlords of manufacturing, who extended their province with breath-robbing swiftness, and drew in their human victims as steadily and increasingly as the butchers their brute victims. The population increased enormously—immigrants from Europe, from the East, from the surrounding sec-

Courtesy of Mrs. Henri

HENRI. Patience Serious

Courtesy of C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries

tions, all hoping to share in one way or another in the city's phenomenal prosperity. The rapid rise in land values offered rich rewards to speculators and promoters; and it stimulated and revolutionized building.

The revolution was implicit in the rapid centralization of population, in the nineteenth-century development of iron and steel construction, and the invention of the passenger elevator. Where population is most crowded, the tendency of building is naturally upward. Imperial Rome had its jerry-built tenements as high as ten stories. With the invention of the passenger elevator, and the constant improvement of sanitary engineering, there was no reason why buildings should not be as high as it was possible to build them; that is, in America, where any attempt of the community to restrict building to a height which would permit a decent enjoyment of light and air and the minimum inconvenience due to congestion, was regarded as an infringement of the God-given right of landlords to collect all the rent that the traffic would bear. In America, therefore, the metal construction toward which England had pointed the way in the Crystal Palace of 1851, and which had already proved its efficacy in the great bridges of the 'seventies, found its logical expression in enormous buildings which turned the streets into canyons, gloomy and comparatively airless, and so increased congestion in certain areas that it was found necessary to build railways both over and under the streets in order to transport the occupants to and fro.

Because of the conditions discussed above, Chicago took the lead in the skyward race; and also because Chicago at the time had a number of able architects who welcomed the problem offered by the incursion of engineering into what had been their exclusive province—who

apparently, indeed, saw no valid reason why, confronted with a new material, they should take refuge in the literal meaning of the word "architect," and leave the field of iron and steel construction to the engineers. One of these, Daniel Burnham, was a brilliant organizer and executive, avid of opportunity to do great works, and something of a dreamer besides, "obsessed with the feudal idea of power." It was Burnham, with his passion and genius for organization, and his slogan "delegate, delegate," who changed the architect's office from the workshop of co-operating craftsmen—as Richardson's had been—to the great modern business organization with innumerable engineers, draughtsmen, and specification writers, all working together impersonally, like the parts of a machine, and too often producing work little better than mechanical. The change was in line with modern industrial development, but while it proved Burnham's executive capacity, it has done more to promote architecture as a business than to improve it as an art.

The second member of this trio was Burnham's partner, John W. Root, the most brilliant of Richardson's disciples, but an engineer as well, and something of an inventor. He was always eager to be the first to do this or that; but it was to Burnham's enterprise and executive ability that he owed his opportunities. The other member was Louis H. Sullivan, something of a poet, a good deal of a dreamer, and withal a man of energetic action; obsessed, according to his own statement, by the beneficent idea of democratic power, as Burnham by that of feudal power. To believe in democracy is necessarily to believe in the individual, and it is not surprising therefore that Sullivan, in his youth, had been inspired by the example of Frank Furness of Philadelphia who, in a day when most architects were designing from books, in the style

of the Victorian Gothic or that of the Third Empire, had the independence of spirit to "make buildings out of his head," and the force of character to impose them, hideous and individual as they were, upon the citizens of Philadelphia. Later, in Chicago, Sullivan's "soul became immersed" in the building of the great Eades bridge across the Mississippi, and that of the cantilever bridge over the Kentucky River. The achievements of the engineers proved to him the power of the "Creative Dreamer; he who possessed the power of vision needed to harness Imagination, to harness the intellect, to make science do his will, to make the emotions serve him—for without emotion nothing."

These three men were chief among that group of Chicago architects who were confronted in the 'eighties by a problem born of expropriation, visible sign that America was traveling at breakneck speed the way that has brought all civilizations to destruction. It is doubtful whether any of them, save possibly Sullivan, fully grasped its implications. The wealth and energy of the country gave such force to its rush toward destruction that it was easy to be exalted by the power of the movement and to overlook or misinterpret the signs which revealed its direction. Burnham aspired to the largest, most costly, and sensational—and was thus completely in the spirit of his time. Root aspired to reputation as a great artist. Sullivan aspired to the significant expression of that power of man in which he had such firm, poetic faith. Burnham succeeded; Root died young; Sullivan was defeated. The event was symbolic.

The humane solution of the problem lay in the field of economics; the architectural solution lay in that of engineering. The architects could not alter the economic system, but they could ally themselves with the engineers.

Thus the direction of urban building was determined. At first, masonry was carried to unprecedented heights. For the Montauk Building, Romanesque in style and rising to the dizzy altitude of nine stories, Root invented the "spread foundation," made by laying steel rails criss-crossed and pouring concrete around them, upon which thereafter great buildings "floated" on the sixty feet of mud underlying the city of Chicago. This foundation, which was replaced early in the century by great concrete piers sunk to the underlying rock, replaced earlier pyramidal stone foundations, enormously heavy and allowing little space in the basements. After the Montauk came other and higher masonry structures. Richardson's severe and powerful Field Wholesale Building rose to ten stories. Adler and Sullivan, in 1886, began the Auditorium Building, also Romanesque in style, ten stories high and with an immense tower, "weighing thirty million pounds, equivalent to twenty stories." The next leap—and the last leap of masonry construction—was to sixteen stories, in Burnham and Root's Monadnock Building, with its "chamfered" corners and the bell-like flare of its walls, which impressed European visitors to the Columbian Exposition more than anything at the Exposition itself, except Sullivan's Transportation Building.

But masonry could not be carried to such heights without making the walls enormously thick at the base, and thus decreasing the space on the lower floors, precisely where space was most valuable. For some time the floors of large buildings had been carried by wrought-iron beams, resting on cast-iron columns. The logical next step was to use an iron skeleton for the outside walls, and cover this skeleton with a curtain of masonry—a step taken in 1884 by Colonel Jenney of Chicago in

Courtesy of the Chicago Art Institute

GLACKENS. At Mouquin's

Collection of Mr. John F. Kraushaar. Courtesy of C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries

M. PRENDERGAST. Rainy Day, Venice (*water color*)

building the Home Insurance Building. The two outer walls of this building were of skeleton construction—wrought-iron beams on cast-iron columns—the party walls of masonry. Three years later Holabird and Roche, in building the Tacoma Building, used skeleton construction throughout. Steel soon replaced wrought and cast iron, and the race skyward was begun in earnest. Burnham and Root built the Rand McNally Building, of skeleton steel entirely covered with terra cotta, and the Masonic Temple, twenty-two stories high, which inspired in some bright mind the graphic word "skyscraper." All these buildings, although quite plainly anything but Romanesque in structure, were draped in the fashionable mantle of the style. It was Louis Sullivan, designing the Wainright Building in St. Louis, who introduced into the architecture of skeleton-steel frames a note of common sense so new as to be entirely original and revolutionary.

The idea which Sullivan expressed in this building was the idea which dominated his life. In the book from which I have already quoted, he has traced the development of this idea from his childhood, through his years in Furness's office, in Paris, and in Chicago. It is a remarkable book, which well repays careful reading. Sullivan held that "a spontaneous and vital art must come fresh from nature, and can only thus come"; and his own close and loving observation of nature taught him that in its every living expression, *form follows function*. In these three words he found what he had sought from the time of his sojourn in Paris, "a rule so broad as to admit of no exceptions." Architecture is functional; therefore in architecture, as in nature, form should be determined by function. Thus architecture, freed from conventional rigidity, might once more be-

come "plastic to the mind and hand of the designer," a living and noble expression of the needs and powers of man. Mr. Fiske Kimball sees in Sullivan's works which embody this idea an analogy with the realistic movements in painting and sculpture of the nineteenth century, and by analogy implies that they have in them the seed of that degeneration into formlessness which marked the productions of the lesser realists. Leaving aside the fact that all great ideas are betrayed by those who merely imitate and reproduce, the analogy is still misleading. It belittles Sullivan's contribution to modern thought, by disregarding the fundamental nature of architecture. In demanding that architects should be guided by consideration of function rather than by an arbitrarily imposed convention of form, Sullivan opened a way toward a creative use of architectural forms, in place of a concern with patching up the differences between formula and function. Mr. Kimball then proceeds to relate Messrs. McKim, Mead and White, standard bearers of the classic revival, with that movement to restore the supremacy of form, of which Cézanne was the principal figure. This analogy, too, seems unfortunate. Cézanne was a great lawgiver, but he derived his laws from nature, not from archæology. He did not summon the world to copy Greek frescoes or Roman marbles. If there must be an analogy it is rather to be found in the movement led by David, which did untold mischief through its attempt to impose upon the nineteenth century what its leader too late realized to be a mistaken conception of classic art. As for the modern concern with form, if one consider the nature of architecture, one realizes that Sullivan ranks as one of its prophets. He stood for freedom and law: freedom for the artist to work in accordance with the laws of his

art. As Cézanne rediscovered and stated those laws in painting, Sullivan rediscovered and stated them in architecture.

Therefore he was the first to grasp the fact that the new method of steel construction, in his own words "was revolutionary, demanding an equally revolutionary architectural mode; that masonry construction, in so far as tall buildings were concerned, was a thing of the past, to be forgotten, that the mind might be free to face and solve new problems in new functional forms. That the old ideas of superimposition must give way before a sense of vertical continuity." In the Wainright Building he expressed this idea by frankly admitting the steel construction, indicating the steel columns by vertical piers that rose to the frieze below the cornice, and expressing the curtain function of the intervening terra cotta panels above and below the windows, by the use of ornament. The tiers of offices, being all alike, received similar external treatment; the attic, indicating the end of the office tiers, and having no special requirements for lighting, proclaimed its nature by its broad expanse of ornamented wall. Throughout, the form of the building expressed its function, and the emphasis on the vertical lines enhanced the effect of loftiness which, Sullivan rightly believed, is the chief emotional appeal of a tall building. The ornament was entirely original. Later, in the Prudential Building, in Buffalo, Sullivan expressed the same idea in much the same way, but even more successfully. The piers terminate in arches whose curves are repeated in the attic windows. The cornice is lighter than in the Wainright Building. The Condict Building in New York and the Gage Building in Chicago are equally success-

ful examples of the most candid expression of steel-frame construction in architecture that has ever been devised.

In his other work Sullivan was steadily testing his theory and finding it valid. Root told him he took his art too seriously, and Burnham said it was bad policy to go so much above the general level of intelligence. But his idea was catching on with other architects; he was becoming an influence. Then came the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. Burnham had been appointed Chief of Construction, and Root consulting architect. In 1891 Root died; and when the five Eastern architects arrived who had been appointed, with five Chicago firms, to plan the Exposition and design its buildings, they were able to gain an easy victory for the classical formula on which they had agreed. Architecturally, the "White City" was an orgy of impudent thieving; there is no doubt of that. I have no intention of describing it. Suffice it to say that it was a classical orgy—Greek or Roman as the individual architect preferred—and that the only building on the grounds which impressed foreign observers was Sullivan's Transportation Building, which eschewed the general whitewashed pretense of permanence and declared itself frankly for what it was—a temporary shelter of stucco for the locomotives and cars within. It also broke the rule that the classical style should be followed. It was individual, with a great square central pavilion enriched by broad bands of ornament, and a golden doorway of receding arches. The foreigners said it was the only American building on the grounds; what they meant was that it was the only original building. They had seen plenty of pseudo-classic temples at home. They carried back the memory of it, and of John Root's Monadnock Building; and there were reminiscences of both in the Euro-

Private Collection. Courtesy of C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries

M. Prendergast. The Swans

Courtesy of the Phillips Memorial Gallery, Washington, D. C.

pean "art nouveau" which flowered some half dozen years later. Americans too were impressed by the Transportation Building; but they were more impressed with the dazzling whiteness, the "dexterously insidious plausibility" of the classical façades. Here was an architecture precisely suited to the American passion for the biggest and best and showiest; an architecture, moreover, which ensured the realization of this dream within the safe confines of a canon of taste that had been fixed two thousand years ago; an architecture in which there was nothing vulgar except its speciousness and pretentiousness, neither of which qualities appears to have made any deep impression upon the admiring multitudes. Scattering to their homes, they carried with them the influence of its magnificent and "tasteful" show; and the classical style was firmly entrenched. The century that began with a democratic scramble for the country's unpre-empted resources, and ended with the republican imperialism of those who had come out on top, ended, as it had begun, with an attempt to impose the Classic façade as a national architectural formula. Where this formula had been regarded a century before as the fitting symbol of American democracy, it was regarded now as a fitting symbol of American republican power and pride. The second attempt was archæologically better than the first, and the enormous wealth that had accumulated during the century permitted it to parade in greater magnificence. But the formula was no better adapted to modern needs than it had been a century before. It was simply, as before, a fashion in architecture, to which the purposes of architecture were ruthlessly subordinated.

That it put an end to the Romanesque revival is unimportant. The substitution of one archæological formula for another was of no vital import to architecture.

But the substitution of a dead formula for a living idea was of vital import. The tragedy in the triumph of classicism lay in the fact that it defeated and obscured Louis Sullivan's idea. Sullivan himself accepted his defeat with fine and unembittered dignity. He had within him the sustaining certitude of rightness. When he lost the big commissions that once had come to him, he turned to the little things, and did them with a rare perfection. The small banks which he designed for Middle Western towns are among his finest works; and modern architecture has yet to produce anything more beautiful in form or in ornament than the Wainright and Getty Tombs. His defeat was none the less tragic for that; and the tragedy is nowhere more poignantly evident than in the remarkably fine series of drawings illustrating his philosophy of ornament, which were among his last works, and in which his superb creative energy, denied more significant expression, found vent in an intricacy that borders on the incredible. He continued to preach his creed in lectures and writings, and at the close of his life embodied it in his autobiography. Although he was defeated, his idea lived, as sound ideas have a way of doing, even though they may be forgotten or ignored for a time. In recent years it has come again to the fore, and has given direction to the significant work that is being done in architecture today.

Chapter Nine

Archæology *vs.* Art

IF CLASSICISM did not completely dominate the field of architecture during the next thirty years, archæology did, with the classical as the favorite formula. Banks reverted to the Greek façades of Latrobe; public buildings were either Greek or Roman. Clubs and houses were patterned after Renaissance models. Railway stations were modeled on Roman baths. Europe was pillaged for designs to be adapted to American uses. In the first flush of their victory at the Columbian Exposition, the classical architects, led by McKim, established the American Academy at Rome, with the purpose of giving students in all branches of art an opportunity to study among the treasures of the Eternal City. The results have been dubious, and nowhere more so than in architecture. Two or three years spent in making measured drawings of Roman ruins is perhaps not the ideal preparation for grappling with, let us say, the problems of steel construction. Such training is calculated to enchain the architectural imagination, to render it timid and inept in meeting such problems, for which, alas, Rome offered no precedent. And, indeed, the architects of this Imperial Age met the problems in no spirit of adventure. They took refuge in books; the

engineers in technology; and between them they did some sorry boggling, of which I shall speak further later on.

The new Imperialism had some beneficent results. Cities aroused to a sense of power and grandeur began to take some interest in their external appearance. L'Enfant's plan for the city of Washington was restored, and the tidal flats of the Potomac were drained and added to the park. It is worthy of note that Alexander J. Cassatt, president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, whose company had just been granted in perpetuity the privilege of retaining its tracks across the Mall, removed them voluntarily at the request of Burnham, who was one of the Park Commission—an extraordinary action for any American railway company, and one which argues well for Burnham's power of persuasion and Cassatt's magnanimity. Chicago created an elaborate system of parks and drives; Philadelphia and San Francisco did likewise. In New York, the lines of the New York Central Railroad were put underground, and Park Avenue was created above them—but railway tracks continue to this day to deface the Hudson River water front. If the cities behind the imperial façade (I borrow the phrase from Mr. Mumford) still sprawled in formless ugliness, there was at least a gesture toward civic improvement; and even that gesture should have due acknowledgment.

If, as Mr. Kimball says, the designers who used the classical form made it express with unexpected flexibility the ideas of a new age, they were hardly so successful in making it express the needs of a new age. When Messrs. McKim, Mead and White "lifted" Labrouste's library of Ste. Geneviève and set it down, somewhat altered in transit, opposite Richardson's Trinity Church in Boston, they may have expressed some modern idea or other, but they did not create a building well adapted

to the uses of a library. Nor did Messrs. Carrère and Hastings succeed any better with the New York Public Library, which is a striking expression of the modern idea of conspicuous waste, and a very poor one of the ineluctable fact that a library is a place in which to house books, and to read them. The Congressional Library in Washington has hundreds of square feet of overdecorated entrance-hall; but the main reading room, tucked away under the central dome, is airless and poorly lighted. The great modern railway stations, modeled on the Roman baths, serve their purpose better, because it is more nearly akin to that of their prototypes: they are built to accommodate crowds of hurrying people. Incidentally they are marvels of engineering. But so far as I know, only one of them even slightly suggests the important fact that it is the gateway to a modern city, and that is Burnham's Pennsylvania Station in Washington.

Museums too can be adapted without procrustean torture to the setting of the Roman bath, although the adaptation involves wasting a good deal of space and spending large amounts of money that might more appropriately be used to purchase works of art. It may at some future time dawn on American minds that a museum is primarily not a building but a collection; at which time we may expect a reversal of the present policy of spending millions for ostentatious buildings and thousands for paintings and sculptures. Until then we may expect that condition to continue of which a Western curator complained who said that he could easily persuade his directors to add a costly new wing to the museum building; but he could not win them to provide the money needed to secure important works of art. The perfect flower of this spirit is the huge and opulent new Philadelphia Museum of Art, which cost the citizens of Philadelphia

a good many million dollars and feeds their civic pride considerably more, one imagines, than it improves their culture, since the important works in the collection that it houses could be adequately displayed in a building one-tenth its size.

It is not my intention to list the triumphs of the classical vogue. They are constantly before the eyes of American citizens, in every town and city of the land, all built by the same formula and of the same materials, regardless of consideration for use or climate—a fine collection of Roman baths, Greek and Roman temples, Italian, French, and Spanish Renaissance palaces. Even the Mausoleum, transformed from tomb to temple, has been re-created on a Washington street corner, looking somewhat cramped and ill at ease in its new environment. Some of the results have been impressive, and some have been even beautiful—Paul Philippe Cret's Public Library in Indianapolis, for example, which is the best Greek building in the United States, or his Spanish Pan-American Building, which is perhaps the most wholly satisfying building in the national capital. A high order of ability has gone into the erection of the classical façade, but the classical formula has hampered its creative expression. How many of our classical buildings, however careful their proportions or correct their detail, give the impression that Sullivan got from one of Frank Furness's amazing houses, the impression that one gets from one of those marvelous tombs by Sullivan himself, of "something fresh and fair . . . a human note, as though someone were talking"? Not many. One wishes that all the ability that has gone into the classical revival might have been directed toward the development of an architecture less imitative, less bound by formula, and better adapted to the needs of the twentieth century.

While Messrs. McKim, Mead and White, with their followers, were busily ushering in the classical millennium, Messrs. Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson were as busily summoning the modern world to return to the piety and honest craftsmanship of the Middle Ages. It was Mr. Cram who issued the clarion calls. Mr. Goodhue was content to express his mediævalism in his designs, which were as fine as the restrictions of his archæological formula permitted them to be. It is as impossible to breathe life into a dead art as into a dead organism; but Mr. Goodhue succeeded as no one else has in giving a semblance of life to Gothic buildings. Thanks to the influence of this firm, American churches during the past twenty-five years have with few exceptions adopted the Gothic style. The Evangelical church has occasionally reverted to the Colonial type, the Roman Catholic to the basilica. The Christian Science church has generally preferred the Roman dome and portico. But the Gothic has been and still is the style most generally approved; and those modern Gothic chapels and cathedrals, which "have all the virtues of the originals except originality," are unquestionably an improvement upon the debased classical and Romanesque forms of the churches built during the late nineteenth century.

The architecture of the first quarter of the twentieth century may be roughly classified somewhat as follows: for public buildings, banks, and railway stations, some variant of classical architecture; for churches, Gothic (with the exceptions already noted); for schools and colleges, classical forms or, more generally, the English collegiate—Tudor or Elizabethan; for houses, a wide range of choice among the variants of the Gothic and classical styles, restricted solely by the demand for "cor-

rectness" and good taste. Of skyscrapers I shall speak later.

Factories for a time were left pretty exclusively in the hands of engineers; and their utilitarian function, combined with the general use of re-inforced concrete, resulted in the scrapping of archæological frills. When the architect got his chance with them, he was forced by the exigencies of function, material, and economy, to abandon formula and solve his problem in the terms that those exigencies imposed. The result is that our factories are among the most successful achievements of American architecture. The same thing may be said of those huge elevators whose severe combinations of geometrical forms constitute a striking expression of modern needs in the forms which those needs dictate. It is in solving those problems for which the past offers no hampering precedent that the modern age has found its most original expression.

Some developments in domestic architecture should be noted. Where the Colonial style has been adopted there has been a tendency to return to local precedent. The modern Colonial house in New England, therefore, has tended to follow the old New England models. In Pennsylvania, the old farmhouses and mansions of ledge-stone have influenced modern building. Around New York there has been a return to the "Dutch" Colonial style. In Florida, Messrs. Carrère and Hastings launched a revival of Spanish architecture, which has been marked by the theatricalism that is likely to accompany a speculative development. In California a group of architects, among whom may be mentioned Willis Polk, Myron Hunt, Louis Mulgardt, and George Washington Smith, have evolved a fine and indigenous architecture which has found its precedent in the old Missions. The Cali-

Courtesy of F. K. M. Rehn Art Galleries

TUCKER. The Funeral of Amos Jodd

Courtesy of the Ferargil Gallery

fornia bungalow, invented by the Greenes, is a type of house well suited to the warm climate of Southern California, and not costly to construct. Often it is picturesquely topped by a tank of water, to be economically heated by the blazing sun. The type has spread to the Northwest, where it has been debased through the introduction of upper rooms, cramped by the low roof-slope, and almost unendurably heated by the merciless summer sun in the dry inland sections.

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With the advent of that era of careful taste which accompanied the classical revival, the furnishing of houses began to be marked by an anxious restraint. Since an uncertain taste might easily go astray in the difficult matter of combining colors, interiors tended to be monochromatic; and even those tints that good taste permitted were rigorously subdued. Taupes, grays, dull greens and blues—no farther might the fallible eye be trusted. Where Oriental rugs were used, these helped to relieve the monotony; where the rugs or carpets were domestic, they were usually in solid color, the maximum of permissible variety being a border in a darker shade of the same color. Furniture was made in imitation of that antique style which happened for the moment to be most in fashion. In the outlying sections—of the West, at least—it came chiefly from the great mail-order houses, in brightly varnished quarter-sawed oak or imitation mahogany. It was the early nineteen hundreds, I believe, which saw the introduction of the unyielding tufted leather couch, and its companion piece, the somewhat less unyielding leather chair. Also the enameled cast-iron bedstead, with its brass knobs, and its aristocratic relative, the bedstead all of brass. It also saw the intro-

duction of the mission furniture which, during my childhood on the Pacific Coast, was considered the last word in discriminating taste, especially for bungalows. This furniture was a product of that unfruitful arts and crafts movement imported from England during the closing years of the century. Two others, pyrography and china painting, were counted in my childhood among the most desirable accomplishments for young ladies artistically inclined.

In the cities, especially of the East, the large-scale importation of antique furnishings, stimulated by the purism of the architects, gave direction to domestic production. Stanford White gave impetus to the movement by importing whole interiors from old European houses, to line the rooms of his pseudo-classic mansions. Only millionaires, of course, could afford to import old houses, but the moderately rich could afford, as Irvin Cobb once said, "to have nothing but second-hand furniture." The merely well-to-do were obliged to content themselves with reproductions, faithful to the last scratch and worm hole. Every one knows the story—the enormous increase in prices of old furnishings as the demand grew and the supply diminished; the wholesale manufacture of spurious antiques both here and abroad; the recent general passion for collecting early American furnishings, a passion which, as Colonial and early Republican things became rare, was extended to "butcher furniture," pressed glass cup-plates, Toby pitchers, Parian vases, china dogs, and Currier and Ives prints—to mention a few heirlooms of American mid-century taste. For those who do not insist upon having their furniture scratched and bored into an appearance of authentic antiquity, the modern purveyor of the products of large-scale manufacture provides a full line of furnishings in every fashionable an-

tique vogue, among which the purchaser has only to choose those that best suit his taste or the style of his house; and he may have his piano, his phonograph, or his radio in cases which the manufacturers fondly believe to be in "period" styles. The vogue of "period" furnishings has been in keeping with that for period dwellings—which can now be had, like the furniture, direct from the mail-order houses, all ready to set up, and each accompanied by the fixtures that its type prescribes.

There is value for the modern world in every excellent product of the past, if it is approached in the right spirit. That imitation is not the right spirit was proved by a long line of nineteenth-century producers of "museum art"—and of "museum architecture" as well. The interiors in which the great majority of people live at the present time express neither the spirit of our own age nor that of the age whose ways they ape. For those few people who can afford to possess the genuine products of ancient craftsmanship there may be great spiritual satisfaction in living constantly "under the influence of a bygone time." Yet unless one has been brought up with such things they are likely to prove distracting, as Goethe once wisely remarked. One wonders whether their place is not more properly the museum—since they have been torn from their natural setting—where they may be seen and enjoyed occasionally, but not lived with. One cannot know, of course. Yet when one reviews the universal rage for period houses and period furnishings that has existed during the past quarter-century, one is irresistibly reminded of another remark of Goethe, apropos of a similar fashion a century ago: "In a house which has so many rooms that some of them are entered only three or four times a year, such a fancy [for old furniture] may pass. . . . But to furnish one's living rooms with such

strange and antiquated objects is not commendable. It is a sort of masquerade which in the long run can do no good but must on the contrary have an unhealthy influence on the man who adopts it. Such a fashion is in contradiction to the age in which we live, and will only confirm the empty and hollow way of thinking in which it originates."

§

"We have now," wrote Louis Sullivan in 1922, "the abounding freedom of eclecticism, the winning smile of taste, but no architecture. For architecture, be it known, is dead." Indeed it seemed so. The architects kept their noses in books, looking for "suggestions," and they were immersed in paper work. John La Farge had warned of this in his Japanese letters, saying that as architects and designers worked more and more on paper, they tended to exhaust their energies before they got to the actual building, so that the result of their drawings was likely to be feeble and tame. What is worse, too much paper work is calculated to produce forgetfulness of the important truth that architecture is the art of building, and buildings are three-dimensional. One suspects that the architects were taking refuge in books and drawings from the troublesome problems offered by modern steel and concrete construction.

One suspects it all the more when one considers what they did with the skyscraper. When the United States went into the World War, its architects had had the problem of skeleton-steel construction before them for thirty years; and with that passion for make-believe which their archæological exercises had fostered, they insisted upon treating it as if it were a problem in masonry. The engineers, who coped so admirably with such unprec-

edented structures as steel bridges and silos, appeared to become helpless as soon as their sphere infringed upon the traditional one of architecture. They contented themselves with solving the mechanical problems of the skyscraper, and left the rest to the archæologists. The classicists took hold of this "proud and soaring thing" and tried to tame it into horizontal repose. They topped it with heavy cornices, they engirdled it with horizontal bands, they split it into sections with balustrades, surmounted by rows of pedimented windows. They encircled it with orders, at top or bottom, or both, and crowned it with cupolas and temples. A new generation fresh from Beaux-Arts plastered festoons over its façade, and cartouches as numerous and indiscriminately placed as brackets had been fifty years before. Meanwhile it continued to lift the cornices and cupolas higher and higher. Archæologists of the Gothic persuasion declared that the skyscraper, being vertical architecture, should wear a Gothic mask; and oblivious of the *non sequitur* they proceeded to deck it out in imitation flying buttresses, to surmount it with Gothic towers, pinnacles, and spires, to decorate it with parapets, turrets, and tabernacle work. At least they let it soar; and in admitting its verticality became somewhat more successful than their Roman brethren; but they were no less preposterous. A healthy instinct finds something ludicrous in seeing forty stories of steel-frame office building suddenly blossom at its apex into a Gothic cathedral or a Greek temple; and something repellant, too, in such frankly dishonest use of Gothic and classic elements. In this egregious masquerade the archæologists all unwittingly admitted their essential lack of respect for the great traditions whose custodians and perpetuators they pretended to be.

Perhaps it was the precedent set by the national gov-

ernment during the War in scrapping the sacred Constitutional rights of American citizens, that gave the city government of New York courage to interfere with the sacred right of land owners to build as they liked on their own property. Or perhaps it was the prospect of streets plunged in perpetual darkness by the steadily ascending skyscrapers. At any rate the New York zoning laws were passed during the War; and when building recommenced the builders were legally required to step back their buildings above a certain height. Other cities soon followed this lead; and thus, fortuitously, was begun the emancipation of the skyscraper from the clutches of archæology. In designing the buildings which followed the new ordinances, architects began to discover that the cubical forms which resulted from the stepping-back process offered opportunities for a plastic handling of masses. The first results were feeble—mere piles of cubes built up in a rather hit-or-miss fashion. But at least the new necessity helped to free the minds of architects of such archæological dead weights as classical cornices, and by so much helped to make the skyscraper "plastic to the mind and hand of the designer." Then came the Chicago *Tribune* contest, with Howells and Hood's winning design in a Gothic drapery of flying buttresses surrounding a tower to which they appeared to lend far stronger support than it needed; and Eliel Saarinen's design, which, as the *Freeman* remarked, "achieved, in terms of today's technique and practicality, a poet's dream." Here at last was a triumphant solution of the problem of the skyscraper—a soaring pile of receding pyramidal masses whose upward flight was abetted by a plastic manipulation of its surface which accented the vertical lines. Louis Sullivan saw in it the rebirth of his dream; and other American architects were not slow to learn from it and

even to plagiarize it. It is remarkable that this solution of an American problem came not from an American architect, but from a Finn; an exponent of that German and Scandinavian school which grew out of the "art nouveau" of the early twentieth century, and has recently been influenced by the works and writings of Sullivan's brilliant disciple, Mr. Frank Lloyd Wright. American architects were too much preoccupied with imitation masonry to face the problem squarely. Mr. Saarinen, being unbound by formula, did for them what they could not, apparently, do for themselves.

Thanks to the influence of his superb building which never existed except on paper, every new skyscraper is now a new adventure in form. The classicists and mediævalists, to be sure, are still with us. Cornices are ruled out, but the lofty terraces may be neatly edged with balustrades topped with classic urns; the receding masses may be ringed with orders, or topped with cupolas and temples. The mediævalists cling to their gargoyles, turrets, pinnacles, and Gothic fretwork—as in Mr. Cass Gilbert's building on the site of White's old Madison Square Garden, whose towering central mass terminates abruptly in what is like nothing so much as an inflated Gothic reliquary. But even the archæologists are impelled by law and the powerful trend toward plastic treatment, to consider their problem somewhat at least in terms of mass and line; rarely do they produce designs so disappointing as Warren and Wetmore's New York Central Building, which has recently been erected on the most imposing site in all Manhattan. Such buildings as Mr. Harmon's Shelton Hotel, Mr. Ralph T. Walker's New York Telephone Building, the Lefcourt Building, the New York Medical Center, designed in the office of Mr. James Gamble Rogers, "333 North Michigan" in Chi-

cago by Holabird and Root and the Chicago Daily News Building by the same architects; such buildings illustrate the modern tendency to treat the skyscraper not only in terms of its function and its emotional appeal as Sullivan defined it, but also—consequently, indeed—in that spirit of concern with significant form which animates the work of modern painters and sculptors. Ornamental detail is sparingly used, chiefly in the geometrical forms first suggested by the work of foreign artists and designers, and adapted in size to the distance from which it is to be seen. There is also a tendency, interesting if not always successful in its results, toward the use of color. It should be mentioned that an explicit statement of the steel skeleton is not considered essential. As Mr. Tallmadge remarks, "it is assumed that every one knows of it and no longer needs to be told. If this be true, as some one has oddly remarked, Sullivan has become an 'Old Master.'" He remains, like Cézanne, the primitive of the way that he has opened.

§

The modern movement in architecture is by no means confined to the skyscraper. An ever increasing number of architects are espousing Sullivan's idea, either avowedly or tacitly. Among those who have openly professed the faith, Mr. Claude Bragdon of Buffalo and Mr. Frank Lloyd Wright of Oak Park, Illinois, have written brilliantly in its defense. Mr. Thomas Hibben, formerly of Indianapolis, and now of New York, has so succinctly stated the conception of architecture held by those who may justly be called the modernists, that it seems desirable to quote him in full:

Form is determined by function and evolved in three dimensions simultaneously. The execution of this form is determined

Miller. Morning

Courtesy of C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries

SLOAN. The Plaza, Santa Fé

by the honest use of materials. The selection of these materials is controlled by strength, economic, climatic, color, and texture factors. The manipulation of them is wholly determined by their sound structural use. The detail resulting from this manipulation can be only in the personal vocabulary of the creator, and any attempt to seek an idealization of "beauty" or a conformity to "style" can result only in sterility.

This animating principle has produced some admirable results, in which the idea of superimposition has given way to that of plastic expression in terms of function and material; results which prove that every problem suggests and contains its own solution, as Sullivan maintained—if only the architect be free to consider problems instead of formulæ. Mr. Hibben's own work is brilliant vindication of his philosophy. In his fine Arthur Jordan group at Butler University in Indianapolis, he has proved that in masonry, as in steel construction, the upward thrust of vertical architecture can be attained without the use of Gothic elements, and without any compromise of practicality. The carved ornament of this building was all designed in terms of the pneumatic chisel, for Mr. Hibben, like Mr. Wright, believes in the use of modern tools. Indeed, he goes farther: he believes that the architect should himself know how to use the tools of modern building, in order that he may design intelligently in terms of those tools; that he should know his materials too, even such new materials as steel and concrete. In short, he believes that architecture is primarily the construction of three-dimensional buildings, rather than the production of two-dimensional designs. If the common sense of such a view seems a bit revolutionary, Mr. Hibben has produced some buildings which justify it.

Mr. Frank Lloyd Wright, who was Sullivan's favorite helper, and had enough genius of his own to espouse Sullivan's idea without imitating his style, is the proverbial prophet without honor in his own country. His designs and his writings have been published in Germany and Holland, and have profoundly influenced architects in those countries and the lands around the Baltic. In Tokio his superb Imperial Hotel was the only building that survived the earthquake of 1923, and the fact, which was due to no dispensation of Providence, but to his genius in devising a form of construction to withstand such disturbances, caused the government to ask him to rebuild the city. But although some of his best work has been done in America, it has had little influence on American architects.

Mr. Wright is pre-eminently a designer of homes, although his Larkin Factory in Buffalo shows, like the Imperial Hotel, a rare ability to find in each problem the solution that it contains in itself. He believes that "a building should be made to grow easily from its site, shaped to harmonize with its surroundings if Nature is manifest there, and if not, try to make it as quiet, substantial, and organic, as she would have been were the opportunity hers." In consonance with this idea, he originated a type of house designed to harmonize with the level prairie of the Middle West; a house of "gently sloping roofs, low proportions, quiet sky lines, suppressed, heavy set chimneys and sheltering overhangs, low terraces and outreaching walls sequestering private gardens." In a book of Mr. Wright's designs that I have before me are photographs of several of his buildings for Middle Western sites which admirably carry out this idea. The emphasis on horizontal lines, however, is by no means confined to his prairie houses. He has carried it over into his

California houses, into the Imperial Hotel—even into his design for a skyscraper, which has formidable horizontal projections at the top. Rarely does he abandon the horizontal emphasis; rather, he clings to it at what sometimes seems an undue sacrifice of logic and fitness, and with frequent disregard of the fact that horizontal lines may suggest heaviness as well as tranquillity. His love for low proportions, moreover, leads him to spread his larger houses over so much space that heating them through Northern winters must involve enormous expense. But this rambling disposition of masses, which of course only millionaires can afford, gives him opportunity for fine combinations of form—combinations which, although Mr. Wright occasionally violates his own canons, usually express the function of the interior.

Like Sullivan, he is a remarkable ornamentalist. His designs are geometrical and bold, adapted to the material in which they are executed, and to modern tools. Many of them would seem to have been inspired by Aztec sculpture; others show a strong influence of modern cubism. Always they are individual, and although they are now and then a bit insistently bold, they are usually an integral and satisfying part of the whole. Mr. Wright goes so far as to design much of the furniture for his houses, and even to prescribe the color scheme, thus leaving his patrons little to do to their rooms except live in them.

Twenty years ago Bertram Goodhue was the most gifted American designer according to archæological formulæ. He had, as I have remarked, come as near breathing life into modern Gothic architecture as a modern can; and in Trinity Church in Havana, and the California State Building at the San Diego Exposition,

he had done the same thing with the Churrigueresque baroque. In the beautiful Gillespie villa at Santa Barbara he showed his mastery of the Greek formula. He was a brilliant and prolific draughtsman who worked in historic modes. But a change appeared; marked first by greater boldness and originality in his use of archæological modes; later by a dissolution of his partnership with Mr. Cram, and a striking out toward freedom of expression. The Nebraska State Capitol shows this struggle; it belongs to his transition period, for with all its simplicity and its fine adaptation to function, it contains reminiscences of both the Gothic and classic modes. Yet it is profoundly moving, in its huge low mass, out of which rises the high central tower that will house the state archives. The decoration, aside from the great busts of traditional figures that emerge abruptly from the walls, and the few sculptured historical scenes, carries out Sullivan's idea of indigenous ornament; for the motifs have been suggested by the plants and animals of the prairie. This building, and the strangely simple and beautiful masses of the Los Angeles Public Library—which mark a further long step toward freedom—warrant the belief that if Bertram Goodhue had not literally lost his life in the struggle to save his Nebraska Capitol from ruin by interfering politicians, he would have become one of the foremost exponents of the modern movement in architecture.

It is in the skyscraper and the factory, however, that modernism has thus far had most of its opportunities. In schools, churches, and domestic architecture, academism still has things pretty much its own way. It should be mentioned, however, that if public schools are not modern architecturally, they are admirably so from the

viewpoint of light, sanitation, and safety. Such men as Allison and Allison of California, Dwight H. Perkins of Chicago, and William B. Ittner of St. Louis have done a great deal to improve both the appearance of school buildings and their adaptation to use; and they deserve great credit for it. As for universities, rarely do they dare entrust their architectural fortunes to an exponent of modern ideas, as Butler has done. They will have modern conveniences, rather, in mediæval buildings such as Mr. James Gamble Rogers's ingeniously "antiqued" Harkness quadrangle at Yale. Yet there are signs of progress. For a Southern college, Mr. Hibben has built a chapel which would satisfy the most exacting cubist; and a recent number of the *Architectural Record* was almost entirely given over to photographs of the extraordinarily fine buildings of the Cranbrook Foundation at Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, from the hand of that prophet of modernism, Eliel Saarinen.

§

It is hardly necessary to remark that the modernist movement in interior decoration which has been under way in Europe for twenty years has made itself felt in this country during the past four or five. Perhaps the priority of the foreign movement accounts for the fact that thus far the best modern silver comes from Denmark and Sweden; the best glass from Sweden, Germany, and France; the best textile designs from France, Austria, and Germany. Although American designers of furniture sometimes show the same straining after effect as their foreign contemporaries, their work is less often clumsy and preposterous. They are also somewhat less given to presenting mutilations of traditional forms in

furniture, as modern creations. It is unnecessary to describe a mode which is generally known. It is sufficient to remark that in general it tends toward simplicity, practicality, and in ornament the substitution of geometrical for organic motifs. In the forms, the attempt to attain significance through a nice counterpoise of lines and planes is sometimes strikingly successful; but it results occasionally in queer little shelves and cubby holes that remind one of nothing so much as the open-shelf motif of the 'sixties. A desk composed of piles of shelves with a slab across them for a top suggests dust and disorder rather more than a successful combination of beauty with utility; especially to the modern city-dweller. In their bold use of color, too, modern decorators are but recapturing the boldness of that time; and it cannot be said that their results are always in better taste. Save for the shelves and cubby holes, the low, rectangular forms of modern furniture remind one of seventeenth-century forms. Like seventeenth-century furniture, too, they are somewhat heavy and "masculine," because, as Mr. Eugene Schoen remarks, the designers have not yet learned how to play with them.

They have achieved some striking results, none the less; but unfortunately rather expensive. Indeed, the most common criticism of modernism is that it comes too high. Mr. Schoen, who is both architect and decorator, and has to his credit some of the most satisfying modern interiors, assures me that although modernism is unquestionably expensive, it yet costs no more to furnish a room with modern furniture and hangings than to fill it with reproductions of antiques. The costliness of modern furniture lies not in the use of exotic woods, as critics have charged, but in the simple fact that it is not yet in

sufficiently general use to warrant quantity-production. It should be mentioned that at the American Designers Gallery, in New York, Mr. Henry Varnum Poor and others have shown some excellent designs in which they have sought—sometimes with considerable success—to overcome the handicap of costliness. The most significant development in modern industrial art, it seems to me, is frank acceptance—as in architecture—of the machine as the tool of our era, and the attempt to design in its terms. Some of the modern silver, for example, in simple forms adapted to the machine, is excellent. These are welcome signs that the modern world is mastering the new tools before which industrial design went down to defeat in the nineteenth century.

I need not dwell here upon the remarkable beauty of such unprecedented modern products as automobiles, airplanes, and railway locomotives. That these are perhaps of all modern products the most satisfying æsthetically has been remarked often enough to be a commonplace. The triumphs of modern naval architecture, also, have been sufficiently noted and admired. What may be remarked is the myopia of those critics who insist upon regarding the extraordinary æsthetic appeal of these things as more or less accidental because, forsooth, "there has been no conscious effort to attain beauty." So far is this from being the case, that one may state it as a law of æsthetics that the more nearly perfect is the adaptation of any object to the use for which it is intended, the more beautiful that object is. In order to be an artist in developing the thing he loves into the utmost fitness for its purpose, it is by no means necessary that man shall regard himself as an artist, or harbor a self-conscious purpose to attain "beauty." In the product of such loving

effort, beauty and utility become mysteriously and indissolubly one.

§

In the architecture of the past ten years, the large building has taken precedence over other types; and the reason lies chiefly in the trend of domestic building. One might more properly say, the decline of domestic building; for the great apartment house, whether it be constructed with a view to renting apartments or selling them, is essentially a profit-making enterprise. The reason for the decline of the one-family house may be found in the constantly increasing cost of sites and of building materials. The American population is now chiefly urban; and the congestion due to the rapid influx of population into the cities is resulting in the inevitable rise of land values, with the consequent upward trend of building. The International Labor Office at Geneva recently published some striking figures bearing on this situation. These figures cover the period from 1921 to 1928; and they show that where, of building permits issued in 1921 in 257 American cities, fifty-eight per cent were for one-family houses and twenty-four per cent for apartment buildings, in 1928 fifty-four per cent were for apartment buildings and only thirty-five per cent for one-family houses. During the same period, permits for two-family houses declined from eighteen per cent of the total in 1921 to eleven per cent in 1928. This by no means indicates that American families are better housed in apartments than in one- or two-family houses. On the contrary, it means that as urban congestion increases, people are obliged to pay more rent for less space, and to forego the luxury of lawns and gardens.

It indicates, simply, that there is no way to beat the

Courtesy of C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries

Sloan. My Mother (*etching*)

Courtesy of Mr. Alfred Stieglitz

Mt. Evergreen Range, Rain and Mist

land monopolist. There have been attempts to do so. Mr. Ernest Flagg, architect of the Singer Building, has built many houses after an ingenious fashion devised by himself in an effort to compensate by cheap construction the steadily increasing cost of building sites; houses in which the partitions are composed of nothing more solid than plaster and wire—a contrivance which, one imagines, makes for economy more than privacy. The growing acuteness of the housing problem has moved such organizations as the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and the Rockefeller Foundation to undertake model-housing schemes. There have also been some efforts in this direction on the part of municipalities, such as that which Mr. Andrew J. Thomas has carried out for the city of New York. But it may be remarked that all such efforts, since they leave out of account the fundamental cause of congestion, and its inevitable result, are essentially negative and can have no permanent value. At best they are palliative; and so are such co-operative housing projects as that which has lately been carried out by the New York garment workers. The condition which has made them necessary is one which has never been corrected by palliatives in any civilization, and cannot be; for there is only one way to correct it, and that way is to make land freely accessible.

Meanwhile families in our urban centers are obliged to live in quarters as cramped and crowded as those of the seventeenth century, and in addition to dispense with the light, air, and open space that made seventeenth-century conditions tolerable. They have better artificial light, to be sure, and they have bathrooms and gas stoves —when they can afford that rare modern luxury, a kitchen. They have radios, too; and they can escape their domestic discomfort by going to the motion pic-

tures, as the crowded populace of Rome went to the circus. But since a family that would have occupied a three-story house fifty years ago is now likely to be huddled into three rooms, one cannot with reason maintain that bathrooms and motion pictures offset the disadvantages of its present situation. And since such a situation obviously allows little provision for the care of children, it is not to be wondered at if children, among the educated classes at least, are decreasing in number at a rate alarming to eugenists and official statisticians.

The skyscraper, therefore, far from embodying the aspiration of a new world, as Mr. Kimball thinks, is the chief sign of its failure to create a humane civilization. At its best, humanly speaking, one can say for it only that it puts a good face on a bad situation. It is, as Sullivan said, "the new, the unexpected, the eloquent peroration of most bald, most sinister, most forbidding conditions." Within these aspiring towers people are reduced to numerals, and if they have more air and a better view than the dwellers in the old dumb-bell flats, they pay for these advantages by crowding into smaller and fewer rooms. The more recent pyramidal towers are of course the aristocrats among apartment houses; and the people who can afford to live in them enjoy more light and air than the great majority who live in houses of from five to ten stories. Yet they pay exorbitantly for the privilege, in money and in space. From my window as I write, I have a fine view of one of Manhattan's latest and most striking towers. It is twenty-seven stories high, and as a pile of symmetrically disposed cubical masses, it is quite satisfying; it reminds one of a rugged and lofty mountain peak, towering above the lesser heights. That my readers may know what light and air are worth in the city of New York, I have inquired into the yearly rentals

of apartments in this building; and I find that one may have three rooms—a living room, two bedrooms, and two baths—on the sixth floor at four thousand dollars a year. If the sixth floor is not sufficiently airy, one may have the same apartment on the twenty-second floor at forty-eight hundred. These apartments do not open on the terraces. Terrace apartments come much higher. When the building was opened, some two or three years ago, curiosity prompted me to inspect it; and rarely have I seen quarters more depressing. The apartments are badly planned, because the plans were dictated by the "envelope" of the building rather than the convenience of the tenants, and although the living rooms are fairly large—as much as fifteen feet square, I should say—their size makes the ceiling seem even lower than the regulation nine feet. Thus, even though they are large, indeed because they are large, they make one feel cramped. Kitchens there are none. Their place is taken by "serving pantries," equipped with the modern convenience of electrical refrigeration, where tenants, if they like, may infringe the fire regulations by cooking on electric grills and chafing dishes. Such is the comfort and convenience to be had in the latest and most expensive skyscraper apartments, if one's yearly income will stand the strain. Save for that negligible minority who can afford the enormous rents demanded for terrace apartments and penthouses, there is no substitute for lawns and gardens; and even a terrace, to the nature lover, seems a rather inadequate makeshift for earth and shrubs and trees. Those who, in their admiration for the skyscraper, forget the evil that has summoned it into being, may possibly dream, with M. Le Corbusier, of cities of skyscrapers separated by stretches of green lawn. It is a pretty dream; but it is one which the person who knows the economic

implications of the skyscraper would hardly be foolish enough to indulge. If land were so cheap that it could be turned into parks, there would be no need for skyscrapers; hence, being extremely costly, they would probably cease to exist—save perhaps to house large-scale collective enterprises—and the population would spread out once more, in small houses which permitted a more intimate contact with nature.

At least this seems probable. Meanwhile the condition which so vitally affects living is by no means without its effect upon the architect; for it at once decreases the number and variety of his opportunities, and handicaps him in making use of such opportunities as he has. As buildings become larger and fewer, obviously, the architect's opportunities are fewer; and as they tend to become mere variations on a single theme, his opportunities for the exercise of originality are decreased in number. When site value, moreover, is as formidable an item in the expense of building as it is at present, the architect whose respect for his work moves him to think in terms of good materials and honest workmanship, is likely to be discouraged and disgusted by the demand of his patron for cheap construction that will compensate his outlay on land. When one considers in addition to these difficulties the further vexations due to monopolistic combinations among the purveyors of building materials and to the regulations, often stupid and shortsighted, of the labor unions, one is inclined to wonder, not that our architects are doing as well as they are in the face of serious and unnatural difficulties, but rather that they have the courage to do anything at all.

Chapter Ten

Modern Painters and Sculptors

AMERICAN art at the beginning of the twentieth century would not have appeared to the casual observer to be on the threshold of any revolutionary change. Most of the artists discussed in Chapters VI and VII were still at work. Some of them indeed were still young, but all of them had found the direction in which their development would proceed. They had accomplished much; in a country where there was almost no general knowledge of art and little interest in it, a country, moreover, whose patrons of art usually preferred old masters or contemporary foreign works to the works of native artists, they had succeeded in producing an art more important than that of any other country during their period except France. Now, American buyers were beginning to realize that good art might be produced in America. The three chief landscape painters (Ryder was a landscape painter, of course, but stood apart) had died during the 'nineties; and their pictures were changing hands at constantly increasing prices. The American school of romantic landscape was at last accepted, and the works of the lesser romanticists shared in the popularity of the more important ones. Even impressionism was beginning to find some acceptance—although Twachtman's

fine canvases were little sought after, and Prendergast's rarely beautiful art would not be recognized for twenty years, save by a few artists and art lovers.

There was little sign of that spirit of "opposition to academic rule or for that matter any rule" which Mr. Cortissoz in 1927 declared to have been in the air for the last twenty-five years. The revolutionary Society of American Artists had won its cause and was therefore no longer revolutionary—a fact signalized in 1906 when it allowed itself to be swallowed by the National Academy. The Ten had begun in 1898 to hold their annual exhibitions, but the group was in no sense to be termed revolutionary, for it represented no tendencies that had not been well defined a decade before the close of the century. The new influences that were making themselves felt in France—that of the post-Impressionists and of those later men known as the *Fauves* (wild beasts)—were as yet almost unheard of in America. Maurice Prendergast had returned in the late 'nineties from his Parisian studies, full of enthusiasm for Cézanne, who was as yet hardly a name to Americans; but Prendergast was living in Boston in poverty and obscurity, and his enthusiasm was known only to a few artists and lovers of art who could not share it because they had no opportunity to know Cézanne's work.

There was no appreciable change during the first few years of the century. New artists were coming on, of course, and finding constantly better opportunities to get their artistic education in America. Every city had its school or schools of art, where the instruction given varied from the positively harmful to the helpful and inspiring. There were museums, too, where among many meretricious things were some good ones which might serve to enlighten the discriminating student. Several of

the foremost artists were teaching—Duveneck in Cincinnati, Chase, Weir, and Twachtman in New York. Eakins in Philadelphia had split the Academy school, and had withdrawn, followed by his pupils. Among the younger artists, Bryson Burroughs, Arthur B. Davies, and Kenneth Hayes Miller continued in their various ways the spirit of nineteenth-century romanticism—Burroughs in his charming landscapes with figures, full of romantic and classic allusion and frank admission of indebtedness to Puvis de Chavannes; Davies in those early landscapes and figures which acknowledged their derivation from the decorative painters of the Italian Renaissance; and Miller in canvases where strongly defined landscapes and human figures were seen through clouds of opalescent haze. Ernest Lawson and Allen Tucker had acquired under Twachtman the impressionism which was to serve as the basis for their individual styles. Out in California, Arthur Putnam produced, before illness cut short his promising career, those small bronzes and one or two large figures which revealed a sturdy independence of the sentimental and vitiating realism of the academy, and a talent more promising than any American sculptor had shown since Rimmer. In New York, Edith Woodman Burroughs produced before her premature death in 1916 those fine portrait heads and figures—among which last may be mentioned her "Fountain of Youth" at the San Francisco Exposition—which entitle her to a distinguished place among American sculptors. A. Stirling Calder of Philadelphia, pupil of Eakins and Anschutz, was doing work which gave evidence of that rare quality among American sculptors, individuality; and Mahonri Young of Salt Lake City had begun to produce those sculptured figures of laborers and athletes which are associated with his name—figures which show the influence

of Daumier, Millet and Meunier, and a genuine native talent.

It was inevitable, however, that American artists should feel the influence of the revolutionary movement which was surging to the fore in France, a movement destined to change, perhaps permanently, the direction of Western art. Paris had by no means lost its hegemony in the world of art; and American artists continued, as in the nineteenth century, to seek instruction there, where they were exposed, as in the past, to the new ideas that were agitating the Parisian art-world. Revolution was nothing new there; it had been in the air since David and his followers threw off the yoke of aristocratic tradition and opened the way for the incredibly rapid development of the nineteenth century. The works of the post-Impressionists—Cézanne, Seurat, Redon, Gauguin, and others—were in logical sequence with this development, and those of the *Fauves* were the logical result of post-Impressionism. Like all revolutionary manifestations, they were inevitable if unforeseen consequences of the circumstances that created them. To be sure, these movements implied "opposition to academic and indeed any rule." So had the Romantic movement; so had the realism of Courbet and of Manet and the Impressionists. The Academy for a century had exercised no authority in France over the artists who continued the tradition; for the Academy was an official institution, and like all institutions, public or private, tended to the static, whereas art is a living thing and therefore has for its fundamental law the law of growth. Only mediocrity finds strength and assurance in yielding to an arbitrarily imposed authority and cultivating the approval of those who wield it. The genuinely gifted person *has* authority by virtue of his endowment; he is too sure of the essentials of his

DEMUTH. Still Life (*water color*)

Courtesy of Mr. Alfred Stieglitz

PACH. Muriel Morris

own development to brook external interference. For this reason the new movement, in America as in France, would involve independence of academic authority, for the American academy, although it exercised only the self-constituted authority of a private corporation, tended no less to the static and the mediocre than the Academy in France.

The nucleus of that opposition to authority which ushered in the new movement in America was a small group of Philadelphia artists whose central figure was Robert Henri—an artist in whose recent death American art lost a noble and inspiring influence. Like other American artists (unfortunately not all) who have studied in the schools of France, he had felt the rigidity and want of vitality in the academic instruction, and had finally abandoned the school in favor of independent study, in which he went for help to the best counselors a student can have: the works of the masters. In his case, the masters who helped him to find himself were Rembrandt and Hals, Goya and Velasquez, Courbet, Manet, Whistler. The cardinal point of his philosophy was the importance of the individual, an importance transcending any arbitrarily fixed limitations whether nationalistic or artistic. He realized that in art, the purpose of the institution is not to help the artist to develop his individuality but on the contrary to force him into the mould of an academic formula. "As a rule," he once wrote, "I find artists divided into two classes: those who are willing to be caught making any kind of technical error, provided nevertheless they say the thing they have to say as well as they can; willing that their work should be open to any criticism so that they can invent a direct and able expression of the thing they wish to say. . . . Then there is the other class which is not willing to be

found making any fault of deportment, but will gladly tamper with an idea to make it fit a more glib and secure technique already learned. Cleverness and skill are what they seek. The significance of expressing the truth and of developing themselves to express it is of no importance to them."

Significance, then, rather than formula, was the thing Mr. Henri sought in those fine early landscapes in which the influence of Manet appears only as a legitimate aid in the expression of his own viewpoint; and in those low-keyed portraits in subtle harmonies of tone, handled in masterly fashion, which express his intensely individual view of life and character. When he returned to America in the 'nineties his studio in Philadelphia became the rendezvous of a group of artists who shared his view—men like William Glackens, John Sloan, Everett Shinn, George Luks, and A. Stirling Calder. Several of the group were illustrators. Glackens and Sloan contributed much fine work to the illustration of the translated novels of Paul de Kock, and these two, with Luks, did much work for the newspapers of the day. Here it may be well to remark that at the time there were no photographic supplements; the illustrator was a graphic reporter, who told his story with his drawings as the writer told it with words. The observation of life that this work necessitated and the rigid discipline that it involved developed in their work a realism for which one finds precedent—as did the artists themselves—in Daumier, Gavarni, Cruikshank, and Leech, in Constantin Guys and Degas. It was a realism that did not choose the picturesque or pathetic or charming aspects of American life for the sake of any of these qualities. Rather these men took life as it was—the squalor of the overcrowded city slums, the merriment of children at play, the bustle and confusion

of crowds—and sought to impart the significance they found in it. Thus it was given them to record the essential character of the America of their day; and the very fact caused them to be slow in finding acceptance with a public which looked for a conventional beauty in the *subject* of a picture and had not even a suspicion that the plane of beauty, like that of art, is the mind of the artist.

In their spare time they painted; and the inspiration for their paintings was the same as that of their work in black and white. Glackens painted those canvases of the city squares, the parks, the race courses and bathing beaches, in which although the manner may hint of Manet and Degas, the point of view is his own. George Luks, that remarkably expressive and remarkably uneven painter, in his paintings and the drawings that are his best work, depicted the busy streets or singled out some figure or group from the throngs that peopled them—two or three farmers bringing in their goods to market; an old slum dweller whom he ironically labels "The Duchess"; or a man playing the guitar while a baby on his knee clutches the instrument with its tiny hands and watches intently the moving fingers that are mysteriously connected with the enchanting sound. John Sloan, in his paintings and etchings, expressed a rarely humorous and sympathetic appreciation of the drama of everyday life in a great city: the roofs and back yards; the surging crowds under the elevated, hurrying home from work at the end of the day; the shoppers of Fifth Avenue, seen with the humorist's eye for idiosyncrasy. The etchings are such vivid and characterful bits of real life that their quality as illustration may easily cause forgetfulness of the mastery that makes them what they are —the remarkable sense of movement, the dramatic con-

trasts of light and dark, the "distortion that looks like truth, and not like distortion." When he shows the sweltering slum dwellers sprawled on the roofs in the heat of the summer night, a fat slattern neglecting the duties of her squalid ménage to devour the woman's page of the daily paper, or two middle-aged women in a sea-going hack criticizing (none too kindly, one feels) the other members of their sex who pass in the endless pageant of Fifth Avenue, he does it with an art born of long and exacting self-discipline in the observation of life and the notation of its significant aspects.

The work of these men and others who shared their spirit constitutes a most important contribution to the American art of the first quarter of the century. With them may be grouped Jerome Myers, although in his work there is more of compassion and less of humor—those pictures of the crowded streets of the East Side, the parks and recreation piers, with their adults, busy or weary or dejected, and their swarming children. Above all one feels his sympathy with the children, whom he depicts with an expressiveness which, as in Sloan's case, conceals the art that is in it: the fine quality of design in the picturesque and appealing little single figures, the manner of their grouping, and in his way of making each of them a bright spot of color which combines with the rest to create a pleasing harmony. George Bellows was a younger member of the Philadelphia group and shared their zest in the life about them if not the originality of their approach to it. Bellows was most successful when he worked in black and white. His canvases usually ring hollow, and his color is unpleasant. His many lithographs show a brilliant facility of execution, but they show also, unfortunately, a facility in borrowing ideas and manner of treatment from the men

about him and from earlier artists—Daumier, Degas, and others. They might easily be the work of several men. Only in an occasional portrait, such as those charming ones of his daughters, does one feel that he is entirely himself. Probably, as La Farge said of Vernet, he "mistook his scale"; and wishing to soar higher than he had it in himself to do, he was obliged to borrow the wings of others. His choice of lurid and melodramatic subjects brought him a popularity which no doubt tended to aggravate his faults. Yet he was genuinely gifted, and if death had not so soon cut short his career, he might perhaps one day have developed an art proceeding from his own ability rather than from that of other men.

Glenn O. Coleman's vivid scenes of New York "low life" deserve mention; and the powerful cartoons of Boardman Robinson and Robert Minor. These men, with Sloan, Art Young, and others, contributed to the *Masses,* later the *Liberator,* much graphic comment, humorous, satirical, and savage, on American life and politics; comment which remains as pungent still as when it first appeared, and which made that magazine the most brilliantly illustrated periodical in America during its years of publication.

There is nothing satirical or savage in the pictures of Maurice Prendergast. His genius was purely lyrical, and the most joyous in American art. Yet although his work was of a very different type from that of the Philadelphia group, his philosophy was in accord with theirs, for he was an individualist who believed in the right of the artist to say what he had to say, in his own way, unhampered by any academic formula. Like them, he believed in the no-jury system of exhibition; and with them, he was instrumental in securing opportunities for American artists to exhibit their works without so much as a

"by your leave" to the academic juries. He was the first American artist to recognize Cézanne, and it was natural therefore that he should also be one of those who helped to introduce the work of Cézanne and his successors to America. His own art, however, shows no trace of Cézanne's manner; nor does it resemble the work of the French Impressionists. All that impressionism gave him was a method of using color; his manner of applying the method, and the thought that he expressed with it, were entirely his own. He was quite unmistakably himself, indeed, from the first. His early New England and Venetian scenes, redeemed from neutrality in tone only through the bright color-patterns formed by the gayly attired throngs who people them, have his distinctive quality of design quite as much as the high-keyed pictures of his later years. Because of his poverty, his development was slow. He worked in his native city of Boston at lettering show-cards until, when he was almost thirty, he had saved a thousand dollars. Meanwhile, he spent his spare time drawing. On Sunday he would go into the country with his sketchbook, take off his coat in some one's pasture, and, as his brother says, "follow the cows around," drawing them as they moved. We may be sure, however, that he did not confine his attention to the cows. There were the trees to practice on —he once told me it took him forty years to learn to paint a tree—and there was the landscape, and the people. When, with his thousand dollars, he had gone to Paris and entered the Académie Julien, he continued these excursions, and the quality of the drawings that he brought back astonished his teacher.

After some five years in Paris he was obliged to return to Boston, where his younger brother Charles had meanwhile become a carver of picture frames. There was no

market for Maurice Prendergast's pictures in Boston, where Sargent was considered the final word in art; nor was there much of a market elsewhere. His art was too individual to overcome the inveterate timidity of collectors. So he too became a carver of picture frames, painting during the day and, when the light began to fail, taking up his carver's tools. It was a happy life in spite of the poverty it involved, the happiest, perhaps, that any one may know; for he had leisure for the work he loved. Yet the poverty had its drawbacks. For example, it made him unable to afford a press for his beautiful monotypes; but with true Yankee ingenuity he solved his problem by placing the sheet of metal on the floor, the paper over it, and taking the impression by thumping and rubbing the paper with a spoon—a process which sometimes drew loud complaints from the tenants on the floor below.

In 1914 the brothers moved to New York; and there, during the last ten years of his life, the work of Maurice Prendergast began to find the recognition that had been so long delayed. Perhaps the growing influence of the modern movement helped him; if his work had a strange look, it was not half so strange as many of the things that younger men were doing, things to which the public was reluctantly becoming accustomed. Not that he ever became popular; his first "one-man show" (if I am not mistaken) was that of his own works and those of his brother, given by Joseph Brummer, that most learned and discriminating of connoisseurs, at his gallery in Fifty-Seventh Street, some two years before Maurice Prendergast's death.

La Farge has somewhere said that we do not so much judge the work of art as the work of art judges us. The work of Maurice Prendergast, from this point of view, may be regarded as a severe judgment of American taste

during his time. He lost little, for he was never discouraged by his failure to find the acceptance that his work deserved; but American art lost much through the tardy recognition of this gifted man. He would have liked to do mural painting, and his work, decorative in the best sense, would have been admirably adapted to murals. But there were no commissions for him at a time when scores of mediocre painters were kept busy defacing the walls of public buildings with vulgar travesties of art. Critics were constantly remarking on the tapestry-like effect of his pictures; but no weaver of tapestries ever asked him for a design. It is not to be complained of; a people no doubt gets the kind of art it deserves. If the art that is most prominent in America, the art of its parks and public buildings, is almost uniformly commonplace, it is because the instinct of the American people does not demand anything better. Their eyes are elsewhere. The dealer who put on the market an automobile as inept and clumsy in design as nine out of ten public monuments would find his output remaining on his hands. Here, the average American's interest is involved, and here he has a sure sense of beauty and fitness. In contrast with this sureness, one remembers that when Mr. MacMonnies's extraordinarily ugly statue of "Civic Virtue" was unveiled in New York, the chorus of protest that went up was inspired not at all by its ugliness but by indignation because the sculptor—observing an age-old convention—had given female form to the temptations that grovel before his masculine embodiment of virtue.

To return to Maurice Prendergast, the artist in him was not dismayed by want of appreciation; probably because he had a clear idea of what one might expect of his countrymen in the way of love for art. He had not,

Courtesy of Mr. Alfred Stieglitz

O'Keeffe. American Radiator Building, Night

HARTMAN. Long Beach

like Trumbull and Vanderlyn a century before him, returned from his European studies with visions of great commissions and a corresponding celebrity. He was content to do his work; and each year his expression became more vigorous and complete. The predominating grays of the earlier pictures gave way to blues, greens, reds—all the most joyous tints that are in nature. These tints are never garish, although in certain canvases they glow with jewel-like effect. The colors were not mixed on the palette but were applied separately, and heavily, with the palette knife. The design was laid in with a mosaic of these pure colors and finished with superimposed touches. When the picture was finished all the spots of pure color united in vibrant tones which perfectly carried the design—the water, the trees, the figures rhythmically grouped, the sails in the distance. He painted the New England coast, the parks with people riding or driving or walking, and the children at play. He painted the circus, in which he found never-ending delight. His water colors, which are oftener landscapes without figures than his oils, are painted in color of brilliant and limpid purity that shows rare mastery of the medium. The subjects, of course, do not matter. What matters is the strength of the man, his perennial youth, and his love for the world in its gayest aspects—the gayety of sunshine, of playing children, of girls in their bright summer dresses, of white sails spread to the breeze. With all its knowledge, its mastery of the medium, this art has in it something essentially childlike, and it is precisely this quality which makes it so appealing. It is the art of a man who retained, through all his years of discipline and growth, the freshness of his early vision; one of those rarely endowed souls for whom, even in complete maturity,

Life's morning freshness hath not left the hills,
Her dew is on the flowers.

This same freshness, and more of naïveté, are in the carved and painted and gilded panels of Charles Prendergast—a unique and delightful art which found its initial inspiration in the incised and burnished floral designs of Italian picture frames. The panel is coated with gesso. The design is incised; then the color is applied and over that the gold leaf. But to describe the method is to give no idea of the variety and richness of surface for which it gives scope in the hands of an artist. Nor can it give any idea of the design, which I can describe no more appropriately than by saying that it reminds one of Benozzo Gozzoli, without being in the least like him. It shares the quality of his vision; his delight in the visible world for the world's sake, and in that other world of the *Märchen* which is supposed to be the exclusive province of primitives and children. Here are winding paths, threaded by men and women on horseback among the prim little trees. Here are the birds and animals which the artist sketched during a day in the country and includes in his design because the sketches pleased him. Here is a little hill town, souvenir of a sojourn in Italy or southern France, and at its foot the blue waters of a Mediterranean bay. If the landscape and the birds and animals are from the sketchbook, however, happily combined into delightful patterns, the people are straight from fairyland, charming and adorable and other-worldly. Mr. Prendergast is a true primitive. The world he leads us into in the panels, chests, and screens to which his unusual art applies, is the world of Aucassin and Nicolette, a world where almost anything might happen, except the commonplace.

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The year 1908 saw the formation of a group known as the Eight, whose members—Henri, Glackens, Luks, Sloan, Shinn, Lawson, Davies, and Maurice Prendergast —associated themselves informally for the purpose of exhibiting their pictures in New York and the larger cities. They had for their secondary aim that of stimulating the formation of organizations outside the established societies. They were in favor of freedom in art; and in 1910 they organized the first independent exhibition. The spirit of opposition to authority was gaining force. Seven of the Eight were members of the Association of American Painters and Sculptors which brought about in 1913 what was perhaps the most sensational event in the annals of American art, the International Exhibition at the Armory of the Sixty-ninth Regiment, in New York.

The purpose of the Association, as announced by the president, Arthur B. Davies, was to give the American public an opportunity "to see for themselves the results of new influences at work in other countries in an art way." It adopted and maintained an impartial attitude. In the exhibition, the works of academicians and insurgents were given equal prominence. Nor were the works exhibited confined to those of living artists. The beginnings of modern art were represented in pictures by Ingres and Delacroix; its development in those of Daumier, Corot, Courbet, Manet, Monet, Rodin, Cézanne, Renoir, Redon, van Gogh, and the men whose revolutionary tendencies were agitating the European art world at the time—such men as Derain, Matisse, Picasso, Brancusi, Duchamp, and Duchamp-Villon. England, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain, France, were represented. In the American section, the works of Ryder, Weir,

Twachtman, Hassam, Prendergast, Sloan, Henri, Luks, Glackens, Miller, Davies, Barnard, and others were shown with those of more aggressive modernists such as Maurer, Karfiol, Walkowitz, Marin, Pach, Schamberg, Kuhn, and Lachaise. For the first time, American artists and the American public had the opportunity to learn what the countries of the Western world were doing in the way of art, and to judge, as the Association purposed, for themselves by themselves the value, *to them,* of the tendencies represented.

It was not, of course, the first inkling of these tendencies that the American artists and public had had. American artists had been returning from abroad full of the theories that were afloat in Paris, the center of the modern movement. Those art lovers who frequented the little gallery of Mr. Stieglitz, known as "291 Fifth Avenue," had there had frequent glimpses of modernism. Mr. John Quinn, the collector, had begun before the Armory show to buy the works of the post-Impressionists, and loaned to the Association several of its important exhibits of their work. But the American public in general had remained comfortably unaware of the post-impressionism, cubism, and futurism which proved so sensational an element in the Armory show that the public came in thousands to see and scoff—and occasionally to admire—both in New York and later in Chicago, and magazines which ordinarily made little of happenings in the art world carried articles illustrated with the most sensational exhibits—notably Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase" and Picabia's "Dance at the Spring"—to bewildered readers all over the country. When the tumult and the shouting had died, three salient facts emerged: that the *succes de scandale* of the exhibition had resulted momentarily in a more widespread interest in art than had ever before

Courtesy of F. K. M. Rehn Art Galleries

HOPPER. Italian Quarter (*water color*)

Courtesy of F. K. M. Rehn Art Galleries

McFee. Fruit with Water Jar

existed among an essentially inartistic people; that the exhibition marked the beginning of the modern movement in this country; and that notoriety by no means implied an easy victory for the radical element. The modernist galleries that were opened in the enthusiasm aroused by the success of the show were obliged eventually to close their doors; the established dealers were slow to take up modern works, and the modernists were obliged to get along as best they could until the public should begin to catch up.

Success was only delayed, however, and meanwhile opportunities to exhibit outside the shows of established societies—which remained firmly opposed to the new movement—continued to improve. The Society of Independent Artists, formed in 1917, has yearly given painters, sculptors, and craftsmen all over the country the opportunity to show their work at its annual exhibitions where the only qualification is the payment of a fee to help cover expenses, and the works are presented with the impartiality that attends an alphabetical arrangement. Other societies and clubs have followed the lead of the Independents, so that in New York especially there is no want of opportunity for the artist, however unorthodox, to present his work for appraisal by fellow artists, critics, and public; and no want of opportunity for these, by the same token, to keep abreast of developments in the world of art, which are by no means to be followed in the yearly exhibitions of the Academy (in New York; in Pittsburgh, Chicago, Washington, the academic exhibitions are more hospitable to modern works). As the modern movement has made friends among collectors, the more progressive dealers have followed the trend, so that there are now several galleries where, during the winter season, works are to be seen which even ten years

ago could have found a showing only in the hospitable exhibition of the Independents.

So much has been written about the modern movement by the artists themselves, who are naturally better qualified to discuss it than any layman could possibly be, that it hardly seems appropriate to go very deeply into its provenance and purpose. I shall content myself, therefore, with setting forth what seem to me its most important aspects and what now appear to be its most significant results, referring those of my readers who wish a more complete explanation to Mr. Walter Pach's admirably clear treatment of the subject in *The Masters of Modern Art.* The modern movement originated in a reaction against that "realism without realization" (I have borrowed this admirable phrase from Mr. Sloan) toward which Western art was drifting after having attained in the works of the Impressionists the ultimate development in that representation of appearances which had been its aim since Cimabue. By the end of the nineteenth century such was the cult of appearances among artists and laymen, according to Mr. Pach, "that these were generally regarded as the only possible reason for the presence of forms and colors in a picture"—an idea which still holds sway over the great majority of minds, it need hardly be stated. The tendency toward a structure more naturalistic than æsthetic was already evident in the paintings of the Impressionists, in which, delightful as they are, structural significance plays a subordinate rôle to the scientific analysis of light and color; and in the sculpture of Rodin, in which unity tends to be lost in preoccupation with the component parts. Evidently the succeeding artists, if their work was to be vital, must find some other mode than that of impressionism; and the search for this mode is already evident in the works

of men who were contemporary with the Impressionists but whose influence was to make itself felt later, men who accepted their discoveries in the field of light and color, and applied these to the realization of a more consciously sought æsthetic structure. Among these men was Seurat, whose intellectuality enabled him to formulate the rules for those combinations of tone, color, and line that produce the harmony which he defines as art, and whose genius enabled him to paint pictures in which these abstract principles found expression in a grandeur of form and purity of color unsurpassed in modern art. Gauguin, fleeing from the art world of Paris, found in the primitive art of the South Seas the inspiration for the quality of design which he felt the need to bring into his work. Van Gogh, coming into contact with impressionism after producing the sombre pictures of his Dutch period, finds release for his genius in canvases where the color flames and quivers with the intensity of his feeling, and drawings in which the landscape, even seen through the restricting medium of black and white, is miraculously flooded with light. What matter if the colors are not always those of nature—if the sky is green or purple instead of the conventional blue—and if the objects are not invariably true to realistic proportion? Always the color relations are harmonious, and the proportions æsthetically just. Redon, aiming not at the reality of the visible world, but at that reality which the mind gives to its images after having passed them through the alembic of the imagination, demonstrates in forms and colors which project the temperament of the mystic, the artist's freedom from the tyranny of objective perception. And Cézanne, above all, gives direction to the modern movement by discovering and stating in canvas after canvas, the fundamental æsthetic laws which

his generation was in danger of forgetting. He was the grand primitive of the modern movement, retaining the aspects of natural appearances, but studying them in their abstract relations—"All in nature is modelled according to the sphere and the cone and the cylinder"—and building up, with modulations of color, harmonies of mass, space, and light which revealed to the eyes of his successors the laws of their art.

The men who come after continue in the way opened by these masters. The world expects a naturalistic representation of objects, and it tends to perceive beauty in the work of art only when this is a faithful rendition of a beautiful subject. This is a convention, of course, as all accepted views of art are conventions; and it is a convention against which the *Fauves* rebel, distorting the objects they represent in order to attain through distortion the needed emphasis upon æsthetic structure, and suppressing not only the detail which would weaken this structure, but whole passages whose elimination will give greater intensity to those which are essential. From this it is only a step to the complete abandonment of naturalistic representation, and the use of the object only as a point of departure from which to attain an abstract representation which retains the essential geometrical forms and uses these in the building up of a design depending for its strength upon a just balance of volumes, and the nicely poised thrust and counter-thrust of lines and planes. Cubism was only a moment in Western art, but it was a moment of crucial importance; for it enabled at once a complete and necessary emancipation from the naturalistic convention, and a concern with the sheerly æsthetic problems which this convention tended to obscure. It was generally considered an anarchistic and chaotic movement. It was anarchistic, if anarchy be

Courtesy of C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries

Du Bois. Night, Montmartre

BAYLINSON. Mrs. Baylinson

taken to mean the substitution of self-discipline for a discipline imposed by custom and convention. It was perhaps chaotic in the sense that its startling novelty caused many mere seekers after sensation and notoriety to identify themselves with it, or to look for new and analogous ways to further their purposes—which had nothing to do with art. These did no harm, and before long they disappeared, as the false and meretricious always disappears. Cubism too, as such, has tended to disappear, but not before it had impressed upon the minds of artists and a few laymen the fact that significance in art is to be sought not in the object—which no doubt presents about the same appearance to all eyes—but in the quality of the artist's inner vision, which transmutes the objects that his physical eye perceives into images conveying not necessarily the appearance of the visible world, but the meaning that it has for him.

This, it appears to me, is the essential significance of that movement which culminated in the abstractions known as cubism. It has taught the world to look for significance rather than verisimilitude in a work of art, by demonstrating that meaning does not depend upon verisimilitude. It has also demonstrated the hollowness of the conventional notion of what is fit material for art. Not that people have ceased to exclaim before a fine sunset, "What a scene for a painter!" or to pronounce an unusually pretty girl an ideal subject for an artist. The view that significance resides in subject still has a strong hold upon the minds of laymen. Yet, thanks to the moderns, we are slowly coming to look for meaning not in the objects that the artist represents, but in the quality of form and color that is in his representation. If the objects are distorted from the naturalistic point of view, this is no more disturbing than the distortion in

an Egyptian fresco or a Gothic sculpture, a Persian miniature or a Japanese print. But what we have hitherto condoned as quaint in the arts of other times and peoples, we are now coming to accept, in those arts and our own, because of its æsthetic rightness. Which brings us to the interesting fact that there is nothing new in modernism except its consciousness of its effort; the truth it has forced us to rediscover is as old as art itself.

Not that the distortions of modern artists are always æsthetically right, or yet the abstractions of the cubists. There has probably been as much stupid or dishonest modernism in proportion to the total number of painters and sculptors working in the modern convention as there has been of stupid or dishonest romanticism or classicism. The artists themselves have not always been successful. Only recently an excellent painter who has not yet entirely abandoned the cubist manner said quite frankly, "We all did things at first that were pretty bad." But between the failures of a gifted and sincere artist and the bad art of a stupid or dishonest one, stretches the whole width of the distance that separates art from its counterfeit. The difference between the genuine and the false is as readily perceptible in modern art, however abstract, as in the art of the past century. One may be deceived at first, but a just estimate comes in time, precisely as with the most naturalistic art. Either the works "wear well" or they do not—and this is the ultimate test of all art. Whether the modern works are lovable is a question which each must answer for himself. Personally, I find one of Matisse's marvelous line drawings or his colorful recent interiors more lovable than the pictures of his cubist period. On the other hand, Villon's cubism is no obstacle to joy in the clarity and balance of his form and the exquisite harmony of his cool, brilliant color. Ten

years ago I would undoubtedly have thought both these artists either notoriety-seekers or slightly insane. Truly it is the work of art that judges us. Whether we shall ever understand the moderns—a constant visitor to the galleries hears frequent complaints that the works are incomprehensible—whether we shall understand them is still another question. Probably not, any more than we shall ever understand the least of Rembrandt's etchings or penetrate the mystery of greatness in a line of Homer. The modern work, like the earlier, may be analyzed to a certain point. But beyond the analysis and always eluding it, is the *life* which may be recognized but never captured in a formula. "It is not difficult to know God," said Bishop Wilson, "if we do not seek to define Him."

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If in general the influence of the modern movement (in which of course the post-Impressionists are to be reckoned) has been in the direction of simplification and stylization, this has not been invariably the case. Modernism contained many elements which have proved fruitful in the minds of American as well as European artists. Not that it is necessary to be "modern" in order to do good work. Many of those American artists whose styles were formed before the movement became influential have continued to produce excellent works which show little or no effect of contact with modernism. Here, as always, the periods overlap. A number of the artists who were at work early in the century, however, have found new inspiration in the ideas which have gained currency during the last twenty years. One feels that Ernest Lawson's glowing landscapes have gained something of their boldness and breadth of style from his knowledge of the men who succeeded the Impressionists. And the work

of Allen Tucker shows the influence of the modern movement, especially of van Gogh's observation of the laws of light. There is also something of van Gogh's fiercely energetic brushwork. But Mr. Tucker's point of view is very much his own. In his landscapes and figure pictures he shows a sure grasp of design, with an ability to render it in vivid and harmonious colors. Gifford Beal, too, shows the modern influence in his departure from his earlier impressionistic method and the increasing simplification of design in those pictures of fisher-folk and the sea which are reminiscent of Winslow Homer's sturdy realism.

The later work of Arthur B. Davies retained little trace of his experimentation with the principles of the cubists. Even in his cubist pictures, indeed, one feels that these principles are only imperfectly understood. The severe abstractions of cubism were not suited to his mystical temperament, and he soon abandoned his researches to devote his remarkable technical ability to those canvases and water colors for which he sought out great mountain landscapes as Church and others had done so long before; not, however, for purposes of representation as they had done, but for purposes of design. Yet one questions whether a future generation will pronounce him more successful than they. There is a want of conviction in the landscapes and the nude figures that people them. The landscapes are often thin, the figures tenuous and posturing. There is too much nostalgic classical allusion and too little robustness. It is perhaps not unjust to regard this art as the last gasp of nineteenth-century romanticism—a romanticism grown precious and sickly, and addicted to the futile retrospection of the aged.

The romanticism of Kenneth Hayes Miller has had a happier outcome. Even in Mr. Miller's earlier pictures

the romantic sentiment was subordinated to his feeling for sculptural form. Now the figures have emerged from their obscuring opalescence, the forms are rounded with an even greater sculptural intensity, and in their combination one feels the influence of Renoir's teaching in the balancing of design in depth. In both Mr. Miller's painting and his fine etchings one feels above all his need for what he calls "dramatic form." And form for him, to be dramatic, must be massive and palpable. For him, "tangibility is a proof of existence." His nude figures are bulky; the flappers and shoppers who often serve him for subjects are so many well-rounded volumes—first to be realized separately, secondly to be drawn into organic relation; his landscapes are built up of compactly ordered contours. In his intense concentration upon the problem of realizing separate forms and textures, and combining them expressively, Mr. Miller is now to be regarded as an important and individual exponent of modernism.

Where Mr. Miller has felt the influence of Renoir's genius in the realization of form, Mr. Glackens has felt that of his genius for color. But those critics who lament that Glackens has become an imitator of Renoir do him injustice. If his color is inspired by Renoir, he nevertheless uses it beautifully and with frank acknowledgment of his debt; and his perception of form has not been greatly altered by his devotion to the great master. That he remains himself in spite of Renoir's influence is most readily perceived if one compares photographs of his recent paintings with those of his earlier work. Seen thus side by side in black and white they betray no radical change. One sees that in such pictures, for example, as "Outdoor Restaurant" or the later beach scenes, the figures are approached in much the same manner as in earlier canvases similar in subject, and that the artist re-

tains his amused perception of the individual characteristics and idiosyncracies which give kaleidoscopic variety to a crowd.

One often hears it stated in an artist's favor that he is contented to paint his pictures and leave modernistic theorizing to others. This has sometimes been said of Mr. Sloan. Indeed there seems to be a rather general impression that Mr. Sloan takes his subjects pretty much as he finds them and does not trouble himself with the æsthetic problems that occupy so many modern artists. One wonders why it should be considered a virtue in an artist not to be thoughtful. Delacroix's writings on art have been of inestimable value to his successors, and other nineteenth-century artists did much theorizing on the subject of their art. In our own time and country, Max Weber, Thomas Benton, and others have written interestingly on their theories of art, and one cannot see that their thoughtfulness about their work has impaired its quality. Mr. Sloan has not written about his theories, but to hear him talk about art is to know that he is none the less one of the most deeply thoughtful of contemporary artists. He is also perhaps the most complete artist in America. His work shows less of effort in realizing his intention than one generally associates with American artists, for to the integrity of his vision he adds the knowledge that comes from long and thoughtful labor. The humorous realism of the New York street scenes and interiors tends, as in the etchings, to induce forgetfulness of the remarkable quality of painting that is in them. The movement of forms and the quality of light are beautifully rendered. No painter has more completely captured the spirit of the city at night, or more strikingly contrasted the brilliant glow of the electric lamps against the encroaching darkness. One who knew only this

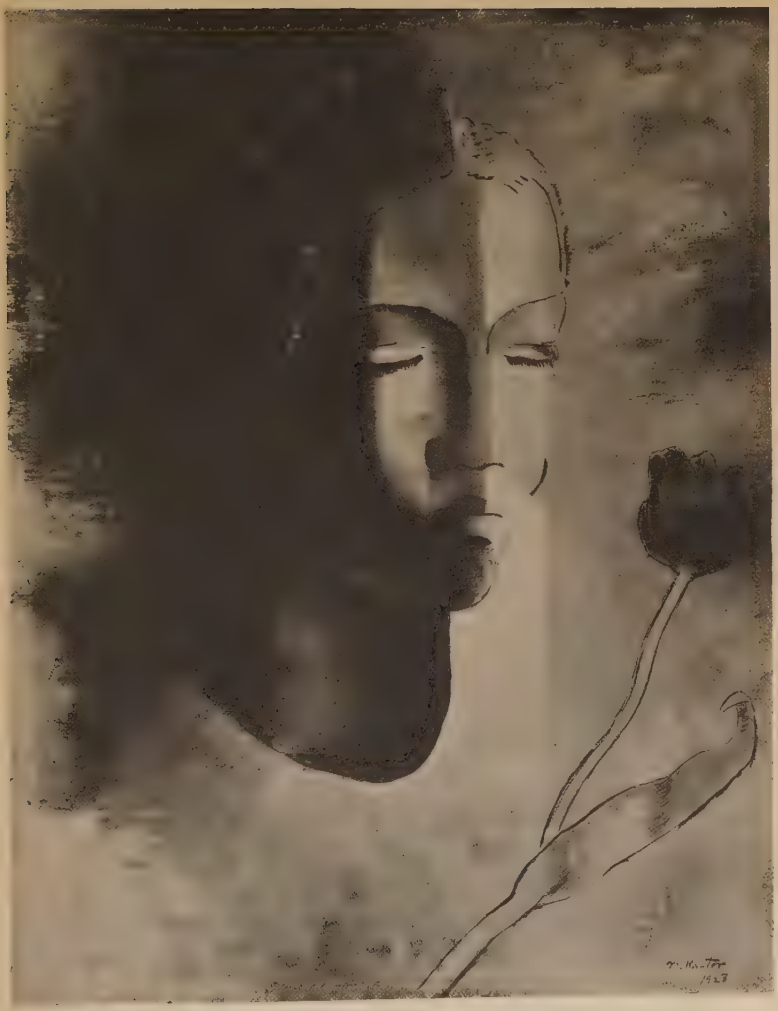
aspect of his work would say that Mr. Sloan cared more for character and for contrasts of light and shadow than for color. But this is not the whole story. His "landscapes," "plazas," and "festivals" from Santa Fé, which count among his most important works, are often vivid in color; and the series of nudes which has largely occupied his time during the past year, represents so many admirable solutions of problems in the relation of forms and colors. These last pictures represent a new departure in subject, and a more exclusive concern with æsthetic problems than has before been evident in Mr. Sloan's work; and their freshness and strength attest a power of renewal that one delights to see in an artist who has already enriched American art with its most important body of etchings, and many paintings which will remain valuable records not only of the life of his time but of its best artistic achievement.

Mr. Henri's very personal expression remained essentially unchanged. The people who represented for him the essence of life and experience were portrayed in much the same way as before—with a somewhat more flowing brush, perhaps, and now and then, one feels, a bit less of that penetration of character that enabled him to produce some of the finest American portraits. Mr. Henri remained the believer in the value of individual reaction to experience, and he is by no means to be reckoned apart from the main stream of the modern movement. The work of Mr. Luks, too, shows no great change; he presents the same mischievous youngsters, the same queer old characters, the same glimpses of city streets, seen in much the same way and painted sometimes with remarkable power, sometimes with very little. Jerome Myers clings to his early subjects and renders them with the same individuality in design and somewhat heightened

color. Boardman Robinson, on the other hand, as one might expect of a considerably younger man, has gained much in the development of his powerful art from his contact with modern works and modern theories. Glenn Coleman for a time combined into cubistic patterns the streets and buildings that have always had such fascination for him, and in his later pictures—from which the ghostly shapes of human derelicts and outcasts have disappeared—the masses, although realistically presented, are ordered in a design which retains all the elements of cubism if not the appearance generally associated with it. The range of art, like that of words, is wide; and there is no more reassuring evidence of the healthy state of American art than the variety of the tendencies that it includes.

§

One hears frequent complaints, especially since the overstimulation of patriotic sentiment during the War, that American art is not sufficiently American, and that the artists must cut off from European influences if they wish to develop a national art. I have already mentioned this tendency, but it seems worth while to emphasize it. Mr. Henri once expressed himself on the subject with a good deal of sound sense. It was not possible, he said, to create an American art from the outside in; any American artist who developed himself and his art by the right study would produce American art quite naturally. So far as art is concerned, America is not a political unit but a geographic and spiritual environment. The artist brought up in that environment will show its influence in his work without having to try—in spite of himself, indeed—no matter how much he learns from foreign schools. Thus in the Middle Ages, when Europe felt the



KANTOR. Head

unifying influence of a universal church, there were German, English, French, and Italian variants of one fundamental mode in art, the Gothic. And in the modern period, with its internationalism due to easy and rapid travel and a world-embracing interchange of goods and ideas, the art of the Western peoples remains fundamentally one art, with variants based on racial and cultural differences.

The question of a national art, then, will take care of itself. The concern of the artist is with the fullest development of his own power of expression. If the art of another people—whether the works of the French cubists, the Maya sculptors, or the African wood-carvers—helps him to develop this power, so much the better. All the artists of the past, of whatever time and people, are the legitimate teachers of the artists of today and those of the future. Many American artists of today have achieved pronounced individuality under the influence of the modern movement. No one would mistake for the work of any other man those virile water colors which entitle John Marin to be counted among the most important American landscape painters; pictures that express a lyric temperament to which his chosen medium is most happily fitted, and in which the essential forms are intensified through the suppression not merely of details but of unimportant passages. Nor would one confuse the water colors of Demuth with those of another painter, whether the still life that he presents more or less realistically with a fine feeling for composition and for delicate nuances of color, or the figures and architectural forms arranged in cubistic designs carried by the same harmonious color. Alfred Maurer's intensity, which shows in his groups of heads with elongated noses and great solemn eyes, is quite as distinctly personal, and finds

an equally personal expression in his nude figures against backgrounds of interpenetrating planes of color. The color of Max Weber may be reminiscent of Cézanne, but his use of it is personal, and so is his finely balanced design, whether this is abstract or composed of realistic forms freely adapted to his purpose of attaining a balanced æsthetic structure. Carl Newman, Charles Sheeler, A. Walkowitz, Preston Dickinson, the late Morton L. Schamberg, and others among contemporary artists have found in the principles of modernism the means to an individual expression which has steadily grown and developed in the years since the Armory show first shocked Americans into awareness that something new and important was going on in the world of art.

No American artist, perhaps, has studied the French masters more assiduously or developed thereby a more personal expression than Walter Pach. Mr. Pach, through the friendships with many of these artists, formed during a long residence in Paris, was able to render invaluable assistance in the assembling of the modern French section of the Armory show. After the show he remained in America and through his lectures and his writings has done more, perhaps, than any other man to keep alive the interest in modern art aroused by the exhibition. Indeed his reputation as writer and lecturer on art has been in danger of obscuring the fact that he is to be counted among the significant American artists. Like many other Americans, he worked for a time in the cubistic formula, but during the last ten years he has returned to a more naturalistic representation, in which the results of his experiments in abstraction are evident in a construction which shows a firm grasp of the abstract elements of design. This firmness and the fine sincerity which is one of this artist's most pleasing characteristics are in every-

thing he does, whether he avail himself of the etching plate, canvas and oils, or the charcoal drawing. These rare qualities, added to a constantly greater freedom and sureness in the use of vivid and harmonious color, make his art one of the most significant and promising in present-day America.

For his etchings Mr. Pach has found much inspiration in the recent monumental architecture of New York. Some of his best plates are those in which he has taken for subjects such buildings as the Shelton, the New York Telephone building, or the impressive grouping of the skyscrapers on lower Manhattan. He has not been the only artist to perceive the possibilities offered by architecture in building up the rigorously ordered masses that form so important an element in modern design. Glenn Coleman combines the streets and houses and overpowering bulk of the skyscrapers into patterns of an almost sinister impressiveness. A. Walkowitz builds them into cubistic abstractions. Charles Sheeler comments upon them with unemotional precision. Bertram Hartman was one of the first to see their possibilities, and the series of water colors in which he took as subjects the severely rhythmical architectural forms seen in strange perspective, marked the beginning of a new and fruitful phase of his art. With this series he abandoned the fanciful compositions and somewhat exaggerated curves of his earlier manner. Since that time his work has shown steady progress and a growing interest in the visible world, on which he brings to bear a perception that is fresh and original and quaintly humorous. Georgia O'Keeffe has found in the great buildings inspiration for those canvases in delicate tones of gray which to one observer at least are more satisfying than the symbolic flower pieces upon which her reputation chiefly rests.

Miss O'Keeffe is a painter of ability and originality whose work is distinguished by refinement of perception—a refinement which sometimes, indeed, borders on the precious—and such a control of her medium as is not often met with among American artists.

It is a very different kind of architecture that Edward Hopper comments upon in his vivid oils and water colors. Mr. Hopper is fascinated by the melancholy relics of the Age of Innocence, the hideous and soundly built structures of a period when American architecture was at its lowest level; houses with fanciful façades and mansard roofs, standing proudly on rather than in the landscape, as though they disdained any intimate relation with it. The weird projections allow, of course, for interesting observation of the play of sunlight and shadow on these peculiarly American buildings, and that may have something to do with Mr. Hopper's interest in them. In any case, whether he turn his attention to architectural curiosities, or to the other subjects which he occasionally chooses, he is an uncompromising realist. But he is a realist whose work, whether in water color, oil, or his strong etchings, has an absorbing artistic interest. Incidentally he has given us an amusing record of the ugliness of certain aspects of American civilization, as Charles Burchfield has recorded the stark hideousness of the Western small town. Niles Spencer is interested in architecture less for its character than for its volumes. Houses, for him, are masses of solid cubical forms to be severely marshaled into a satisfying design. Preston Dickinson shares this view, whether he express it abstractly or realistically in the pleasing combinations of blues and greens that seem to be characteristic of his color.

It is extremely difficult, and perhaps a bit unjust, to single out of the large group of contemporary painters

BENTON. The Slaves; History of the United States, Chapter II, Part IV (*mural*)

From A History of Commerce, *for Kaufmann's Department Store, Pittsburgh, Pa.*

ROBINSON. Persians and Arabs (before the Christian era) (*mural*)

those whose work seems most promising The field is too wide and the future too uncertain. The artists themselves are likely to feel, with reason, that the work they have done thus far is no more than a promise of what they will do in future. The number of painters who have already shown ability and capacity for growth is so large that it is impossible to give in a limited space even a just idea of what they have done thus far. One must therefore content oneself with singling out those who appear to have attained a more or less definitive style—although this by no means implies that their development has ceased.

Henry Lee McFee may be mentioned here, for his portraits, landscapes, and still-life which evidence fine integrity of conception and a considerable feeling for color. Eugene Speicher's portraits are sincere and workmanlike, and those of Maurice Sterne reveal an art both individual and mature. Mr. Sterne may also be mentioned as an able sculptor. Guy Pène du Bois continues in the manner of his earlier work, but with constantly increasing expressiveness. He now lives in Paris, but the Parisian backgrounds of his later pictures form the setting for the same American flappers and their attendant swains, who inspire him with ironic amusement. In some of his later pictures these characteristic groups are seen under street lamps, and the play of light on the forms is beautifully handled. Bernard Karfiol combines with his modernism a poetic quality which is rather rare among modern painters.

Among those painters who are only now coming into full possession of their powers, much may be expected of A. S. Baylinson and Morris Kantor, whom one associates not because of any resemblance in their work, but because they shared an exhibition during the past year

at the Brummer Galleries—the first important showing of their pictures. Both began painting in a naturalistic manner, passed through a period of experimental abstraction, and have developed styles in which references to cubism are retained although the tendency is to return to a realistic representation. But here the resemblance ceases. Each has his personal view of form and color, which finds expression in a strongly individual style. Mr. Baylinson's work is delightful in its sure grasp of construction, which is seen to excellent advantage in his fine drawings of the nude, and in his strong heads and flower pieces, where some of the passages are still rendered in an abstract manner. Mr. Kantor retains his use of abstraction in his free combination of forms having no other than an æsthetic relation—a manner which may prove baffling to the observer who expects a picture to account for the appearances in a given scene, and to introduce nothing that could not actually appear in that scene at that moment. This artist is notable for the sensitiveness of his line and the remarkably fine quality of his color.

The work of the painters mentioned above, and others who have already justified a confident expectation of further development, warrants a firm belief in the value for America of the ideas released by the modern movement. It is still too early to look for the full effect of these ideas. If among the moderns no painter may as yet be compared in importance to Eakins, Ryder, or Homer, it would be rash indeed to assume that none will appear. Indeed, we may not be sure that painters of equal importance are not already among us, whom our very nearness prevents us from appraising at their full worth. There is ample evidence of the vitality of present-day American art in the work of many modern artists—of William

Zorach, who as painter and sculptor is decidedly in the modern tradition; Marguerite Zorach, who shows its influence in her painting and her unusual embroideries; Henry Varnum Poor, whose modernism finds expression in paint and in his extraordinary pottery; Yasuo Kuniyoshi, who stands foremost among several Japanese painters who have identified themselves with American art; and others such as Edwin Booth Grossmann, Joseph Pollet, Katherine Schmidt, Marjorie Phillips, Lucien Labaudt, Helène Iungerich, and Fred Gardner. Of an art which gives scope for the variety of the tendencies represented in the work of these artists, and others whom I have not space to mention here, one may justifiably expect much.

§

When one comes to consider American mural decoration, one feels tempted to dispose of the subject in much the same way as Bishop Pontoppidan disposed of owls in Iceland. To be sure, one must admit that since America is a large country, and since its mural decorations are therefore widely scattered, it is impossible to study them all. There may be good mural work here and there that one cannot know about. One thing, however, may safely be said: that the work of the men who have made their reputation chiefly in that field is pretty uniformly uninspired, if one except such artists as John La Farge and his pupil Augustus Vincent Tack. It is not alone in America that decorative painting has sunk to a low level; in France, if one except the work of Delacroix, Chassériau, and Chavannes, modern mural painting has by no means been up to the standard set by the great painters of easel-pictures.

It is hardly to be wondered at. The decorative painter is not only under the necessity of fitting his work to an architectural setting, to make it an integral part of a decorative design embracing the whole interior in which it has its place; but he is obliged also to work in co-operation with architects and owners or public officials. All three of these, in America, have inclined to timidity; therefore, they have "played safe" by prescribing historical subjects or falling back heavily upon the classic formulæ provided by the school for just such contingencies. In recent years there has been a tendency to accept decorations that illustrate modern life. But in general they have patronized the "ideal" and the "symbolic." If the ideal was hackneyed and the symbolic banal, no one concerned—not the architect, the owner or Commission, the artist or the public—seemed to see anything objectionable in that. Hence those acres of meaningless forms which people the walls of our monumental buildings, forms all alike and arbitrarily christened with the names of virtues, cities, sentiments, or seasons; forms supplied, with all their symbolic attributes, by painters of all degrees of reputation, from John Singer Sargent to the anonymous practitioner who works for a salary and paints by the yard.

Yet mural decoration in this country had creditable beginnings, if one except the journeyman work of Brumidi and his compatriots who provided the frieze for the Rotunda of the National Capitol, and who possessed the traditional Italian technique of fresco painting, with no ideas and no particular ability. One may also except Leutze's "Star of Empire," which stands as an isolated example of German decorative painting. American mural painting really began with John La Farge; and the first complete decorative scheme in the country was the in-

Photograph by Paul Strand

LACHAISE. Woman

HAMMER. Elinor

terior of Trinity Church in Boston planned by La Farge and executed by him, with a number of artists whom he pressed into service as assistants; executed, moreover, in six months and under every conceivable difficulty. In spite of the haste and the difficulties the work was successful to a degree which demonstrated the artistic possibilities of decorative work when architects, painters, and sculptors labor in harmony to create a beautiful interior.

La Farge was a pioneer in American mural painting; but his work has not been improved upon by his successors. Hunt's decorations in the Capitol at Albany, so soon obscured by the reconstruction of the building, were the only decorative work that I know of in the late nineteenth century that could be compared with that of La Farge. Compared with the mural work of the other men who have followed him—Cox, Vedder, Blashfield, Simmons, Abbey, to mention only a few—his work, even when least successful, stands out like that of a master. Such a man may fall short of his intention, but he is incapable of a cheap intention; and cheap intention has been the bane of American mural painting.

It is remarkable in an age when religious art is almost universally without religious feeling that he was most successful with religious subjects. He worked in the tradition handed down by mediæval and Renaissance painters; but his work is no mere borrowing of externals. He recaptured in a remarkable degree the devotional spirit of the early masters. It is in the fine hieratic figures of Trinity Church; it was in the "Resurrection" at St. Thomas's (unfortunately destroyed by fire), especially in the group of the three Marys; and it is in his masterpiece in the Church of the Ascension, with its beautiful soaring choirs of angels and its harmonious and vibrant color.

Second only to La Farge's reputation as a mural painter

is that of Sargent. Indeed, Sargent's work in the Boston Public Library is perhaps even better known to the American public than any of La Farge's murals. When Sargent received the commission for this work, he was a portrait painter who had never even attempted mural decoration. As the work was part by part unveiled after several years, so loud was the general chorus of praise that the few dissenting voices were completely drowned. Let it be said that the artist solved his problem with considerable ingenuity. Technically, the pictures fulfill the requirements of mural decoration: they are well fitted to their spaces; their dull, restricted color keeps the walls flat; the raised gold ornament affords variety of surface. But when one looks for the meaning of this ambitious undertaking, one may not expect to get it from the paintings themselves. They have none of that æsthetic harmony which conveys the artist's meaning directly, without need of explanatory notes. Among the confusion of forms the eye wanders helplessly, noting here an imitation of Egyptian art, there a challenge to comparison with the Assyrian or Byzantine, elsewhere an unconvincing monster in the act of devouring innumerable nude figures—and so on through a series of compositions in which, although they have a "story" which may be understood with the help of a guidebook, there is æsthetic confusion; and not confusion only, but emptiness.

Because of their wide reputation, I have spoken at length of these decorations by Sargent. It is not my intention to weary my readers with descriptions of American mural paintings. Yet Abbey's decorations in the same building deserve mention not only because of their popularity but because their quality entitles them to consideration. These are not murals, properly speaking, but large easel-pictures, characteristic of his illustrator's man-

ner, set in the wall rather than forming part of it, but rendering with sincerity and charm their story of the Holy Grail. Abbey learned from his experience with these pictures, and his decorations in the Pennsylvania State Capitol are much better adapted to the architectural setting; but for all that, they lack the poetic feeling of his work in Boston. The other painters who have devoted themselves to mural works have understood well enough the technique of mural painting, but the banality of their ideas has pretty generally prevented them from doing anything notable with it. The walls they decorate may glow with color, but the color is used to carry designs whose ineptitude often borders on the ludicrous —designs such as Alexander's "Apotheosis of Pittsburgh" in the Carnegie Institute, or Cox's "Marriage of the Atlantic and Pacific," in the Wisconsin State Capitol. There are honorable exceptions. Vedder's mural painting wears the air of unreality that hung over all his later work; but for all that, it is better in design than most American decorative painting. Abbott Thayer rendered his characteristic subjects in mural decoration with good effect. Augustus Vincent Tack has developed a style of his own which is in striking contrast to the sameness that characterizes most work of the sort. His subjects are much the same as those of other mural painters, but infused with a mysticism which redeems them from banality. Like his teacher, La Farge, he is at his best in religious subjects, which he renders with true devotional feeling. His method of using color is unique, and results from long research and experimentation, in which he has learned much from the Impressionists and their successors. The design is solidly painted, and over it are drawn mosaic-like films of color, which give a vibrant quality to the surface and a mysterious, apparitional ap-

pearance to the forms. The method gives carrying power; if there is any criticism to be made, it is that the work lacks the strength it might have if the mosaic-like color were employed to model the forms rather than to obscure them—as Prendergast, for example, laid in his design in a mosaic of color.

The modern painters have as yet had little opportunity to do decorative work. They are likely to have more in future, now that the modern spirit is at work among architects and craftsmen. Thomas Benton has not waited for opportunity, but has painted, with no prospect of seeing them hung, the large murals in which he is carrying out his idea of a graphic history of the United States. The work gives scope at once for Mr. Benton's interest in American history and American types, for his characteristic realism and the construction of design in depth which is his artistic ideal. He has handled his problem with a considerable degree of success. The forms are solid and effectively combined. Seen, however, from the distance at which some of these pictures have been hung in the exhibitions of the Architectural League, the colors seem too sombre to carry as well as one could desire. Now and then, too, the forms are a bit overcrowded, and somewhat overmodeled. None the less, these murals are powerful and should have a strong appeal for those who are eagerly awaiting the emergence of a distinctly American art. In subject, and in the rendition of types and setting, they are wholly and unmistakably of this time and country, and they deserve a better fate than to rest unseen in storage.

In his series of mural paintings, depicting the history of commerce for a department store in Pittsburgh, Boardman Robinson has found a happy expression for one of the strongest talents in present-day American art. This

is not Mr. Robinson's first attempt at mural work, although it is the first he has been commissioned to do. His "Sermon on the Mount," which has hung for some time in the office of the architect Mr. Eugene Schoen, is handled in the manner of mural painting and shows what dramatic quality can be infused into religious subjects by a gifted modernist. His "Adam and Eve," which is also to be seen at Mr. Schoen's, is one of the finest things in modern American painting. One dislikes to think what his murals for Pittsburgh would have become in the hands of a conventional mural painter—something, no doubt, on the order of Blashfield's "Iron," in the Bank of Pittsburgh, or Alexander's ineptitudes at the Carnegie Institute. In Mr. Robinson's hands they have attained the decorative quality which belongs to all good art. The groups of figures in these huge canvases are stylistically rendered and rhythmically combined. Details are rigidly eliminated, as befits work to be seen from a distance, where the carrying power depends upon a just balance of space and mass. These murals are higher in key and more pleasing in color than Mr. Benton's; there is more light in them and therefore greater carrying power. The work of these two able modern painters is of peculiar importance at present, as indicating the direction that mural decoration may be expected to take in the hands of modern artists, and the significance that it may assume when once it is released from the shackles of academic formulæ.

§

In America, as in France, fewer sculptors than painters are doing important work. Quality, however, is fortunately not to be gauged by number. There are a few modern American sculptors whose work is individual

and significant. More even, perhaps, than painting, sculpture needed the modern emphasis upon structure. The tendency to merely anatomical structure was producing a sculpture irreproachable anatomically and meaningless artistically. The modern sculptors, like the painters, have repudiated the canon of naturalism. They have experimented with abstract design, following the distinguished example of Duchamp-Villon; and like the painters, they have gained new strength from their study of arts whose emphasis has been upon structure rather than upon realistic representation—the art of the African wood-carvers, and of the Egyptian, Byzantine, and Gothic sculptors. The academic sculptors, too, have drawn heavily upon the art of the ancients, but with this difference, that they have either slavishly imitated the external aspects of ancient arts or welded these into strange hybrids with the naturalistic representation sponsored by the Academy. So general indeed has this habit become that one is tempted to see in it a futile and no doubt unconscious endeavor to introduce modernist principles as it were by the back door. I have already spoken of the stupid or dishonest workers who ape the moderns, as others ape the ancients. To those who shine by the light of others it matters little who furnishes their light; to art it matters not at all, for it has nothing to do with them. The distinction to be made between the artist and the pseudo-artist is that between assimilation of principles and a mere imitation of effects—a distinction which inevitably comes out in any comparison of their work.

Among the sculptors of today a few men stand out prominently—in quality of their work if not always in reputation. The sculpture of Gaston Lachaise may justly be termed American, for Mr. Lachaise, although French by birth, is a naturalized citizen and has been in this

country twenty-four years. Since he was still very young when he came, his art has really developed here. It is an intensely personal art which shows a rare combination of qualities. The sculptor knows his materials; he is familiar with the chisel, and he knows how to give exquisite finish to his bronzes and marbles. But with this craftsman's feeling for patinas he combines the artist's concern with harmonious relations of masses and lines and the expressive simplification of form. He is fascinated by contrasts between amply rounded masses and delicate, graceful forms; and his feeling for these contrasts has found expression in female figures with massive hips and breasts and slender, tapering legs and arms. To render mass without the sense of heaviness that so often accompanies it seems to be his ideal; and he has succeeded in giving to his ample forms an appearance of lightness and almost airy grace. One of his most delightful works is one of these characteristic figures in bas-relief, beautiful in its subtly rounded contours and the pleasing tactile quality of its surface. He has also a talent for the decorative, which has found expression in such works as his well-known groups of peacocks and dolphins. Not the least impressive of his sculptures are his ideal heads and portraits, now simplified almost to the point of stylization, again rendered, as in the portrait of John Marin, in a faithfully realistic manner. At present he is engaged upon a male figure of heroic size which promises to be one of the most important of his works. Mr. Lachaise is an artist who has already accomplished much, and from whom one is therefore justified in expecting much in future.

Another sculptor who is American by choice is Trygve Hammer, who came to this country from Norway as a young man, and studied his art with the American sculp-

tor Hermon A. MacNeil. There is rugged strength in Mr. Hammer's work, and a fine austerity. He is at his best, perhaps, in those strong heads which prove that the modern tendency to stylization is not incompatible with portraiture that renders not only character but even likeness. Yet the massive bears of his Roosevelt memorial show an ability—rare in American art—to give monumental significance to animal sculpture—an ability which Mr. Lachaise, too, has evidenced in his fine sea lion with its upraised head and its suave masses that quiver with life.

No fact comes out more strikingly in the work of the better modern sculptors than its individuality. The talents of the two sculptors just mentioned are in striking contrast, Mr. Lachaise getting his effects—in most, not all, of his works—by means of rounded masses, and Mr. Hammer tending toward an emphasis upon planes and angles. Jacob Epstein, an American sculptor living in London, works in yet another way. He has none of Mr. Lachaise's feeling for smooth and undulating surfaces; his portrait heads are strongly and quite realistically drawn in the clay, and the rough state in which he leaves the material is translated into the bronze. Having achieved the structure he desires, he does not concern himself with finish. This is the method Mr. Epstein has used in his monumental "Mother and Child," although the manner is quite different—the sculptor more frankly concerning himself with abstract design. In stone he works differently, as suits the material. His "Day" and "Night," at the doorways of the London Tube's new building, are severely stylistic groups. The surfaces here are smooth; the planes are harshly defined, and the draperies are indicated in deeply grooved lines which enhance the effectiveness of the design. Mr. Epstein like

EPSTEIN. Mother and Child

Courtesy of the Weyhe Gallery

Whistler before him, has been driven to extravagance by contact with English philistinism. His art violates the conventional notion of beauty as deliberately as it violates the canon of naturalistic proportion; but no one will deny him the virtues of strength and originality.

Another sculptor, who did some important work before his early death, was Charles Cary Rumsey, whose frieze representing a buffalo hunt, over the entrance to the Manhattan bridge, in New York, is finely conceived and executed. This sculptor had an especial interest in animals, which he modeled with considerable style; but he was equally resourceful in dealing with the human figure. His "Bathers" is a bas-relief of several well-grouped figures against a background in which the sculptor has ingeniously conveyed an impression of the receding planes of landscape by means of long irregular lines indicating two ridges and the distant sea. Hunt Diederich is successful in his sculptures of animals both in the round and in the silhouettes which he uses in his decorative iron work. William Zorach is almost as much the cubist in his sculpture as in his painting. He works a great deal in wood, which he handles with craftsmanlike feeling for its quality and its possibilities. His work, whether in wood or in other materials, is original and satisfying, especially his statues of children. Arnold Ronnebeck, a sculptor who studied with Maillol and Bourdelle, and did some experimenting with abstract forms, has produced significant work. At present, as director of the Denver Museum, he is exercising a wholesome influence through his hospitality to exhibitions of modern works. Other sculptors, such as Robert Garrison, Woldemar Rannus, and Duncan Ferguson, are contributing each in his own way to a branch of art which is steadily gaining

in importance under the vital influence of the modern movement.

If I have left academic sculpture out of this discussion in favor of artists some of whom are as yet scarcely known outside a small group of art lovers, I have no apology to make for doing so. The sculptor who permits his head to be securely fastened in the head-rest supplied by the academy is prevented from seeing in more than one direction, and that, unfortunately, a wrong one. Mr. Manship, who is by all odds the most prominent among the younger academic sculptors, uses his remarkable craftsmanship to facilitate a wide range of borrowing from the arts of other periods and peoples. Both he and Mr. Jennewein have talent, but such originality as they might have developed has been effectually suppressed by their associations. Both have come under the influence of the American Academy at Rome, an influence which, if one may judge—indeed it is the only way one can judge —by the work the prize winners have turned out, is the most baneful in American art. The list of sculptors who work under analogous influences is too long to be enumerated, even if there were any point in doing so. If their work is valuable for anything it is as furnishing by contrast with the work of the independent sculptors, a striking proof of its own futility, and the value to American art of contact with the modern movement.

Although the purpose of this book has been to trace the development in America of the transplanted arts of Europe, I can not leave the subject of art in this country without at least a mention of indigenous American arts. The descendants of the original inhabitants, robbed of the lands of their fathers and crowded into reservations under governmental supervision, have retained through all their tragic experience many of their ancient customs and

their ancient arts. The art of the American Indians is a subject which could be adequately discussed only in a book devoted exclusively to that subject. Indeed, it has been admirably treated, not in one book but in many. The bulletins of the Bureau of American Ethnology of the Smithsonian Institution form an invaluable repository of information concerning the customs and arts of the various Indian tribes. Since the Indians of the Southwest represent the highest culture among the native inhabitants, it is naturally among those tribes that the native handicrafts are most highly developed. The beautiful rugs made among these people, and their pottery, fashioned without use of the potter's wheel and superb in form and decoration, have exerted a profound influence on American designers. Their belts and bracelets, fashioned of silver and set with turquoise, and their necklaces of silver beads interspersed with squash-blossoms, are beautiful in design and workmanship.

Of late years, unfortunately, there has been a steadily increasing yearly influx of tourists into New Mexico and Arizona, drawn by the interest in the life of these people, and their extraordinary ceremonial dances, that was first aroused by the American artists who have settled among them. The result has been a growing commercialization of their work and a consequent deterioration in its quality. The curse of sightseers is accompanied by the curse of meddling government agents who have repeatedly tried to interfere with the ancient ceremonial rites. In spite of these harassments, however, one may still find among them artists who retain a sure sense of significance in form and a powerful feeling in the use of the traditional symbolic designs. One of the most interesting present-day manifestations of their artistic genius is their paintings in water color, for which the ceremonial dances

provide subjects. There is no attempt to represent the setting of the dance; the figures alone are rendered, in all the brilliant, barbaric colors of the ceremonial costumes, against the white or gray paper. If the sky and earth appear at all, they appear not as earth and sky, but as conventional symbols. One hopes that these artists—Awa Tzireh, Tonita Peña, Ogwa Pi, Juan Pino, Otis Polelomena, and others—will remain unspoiled by the encroachment of an alien civilization, for they are producing work remarkable both for its power and for its significance as the product of an ancient and indigenous culture.

§

With all its wealth, America is still culturally poor. It has still far to go to overcome what Bertram Goodhue once spoke of as "the desolation of a civilization that has never been in the cradle." It would be foolish to deny this fact, or to lament it. Rather, one may find satisfaction and reassurance in the remarkable degree in which American artists of the past fifty years have been able to surmount the cultural poverty and the prevailing indifference to art. The constantly improving collections in every important center of population have been of great assistance to them, and would have been even more helpful, no doubt, if a surer taste had gone into their formation. It is unfortunately true, as Mr. Pach points out in his "Ananias," that our museums house, along with the living works of the past, many of those counterfeits of art which appeal to the instinct for the bathos. The corrupting effect of these counterfeits is only too evident in much of the so-called art that is being produced today. The condition is temporary, of course; the artistic standard of American museums is constantly

improving as taste and connoisseurship improve. None the less it is unfortunate while it lasts.

An influence equally corrupting is that of the traveling collections of the products of Ananias, often accompanied by himself, that are sent out yearly by certain organizations in New York to the smaller American cities, where the serious business of sales is cleverly abetted by a series of receptions and dinners, so that the inhabitants may be duly impressed with the opportunity not only to see the "art" of the metropolis but actually to meet the artists. A painter from the Southwest told me only recently that one of these traveling exhibitions last winter took eighty thousand dollars out of the city in which she lives; and that the inhabitants who aspire to culture are so deeply impressed by these yearly visitations that they will have nothing to do with any art which does not bear the stamp of approval of the organization which sends them out.

In volume, the work of bad artists is immeasurably greater than that of good ones; and the work of bad artists divides sharply into two categories: that of the artist who is honest enough but has nothing to say with his laboriously acquired technique; and that of the artist who, having also nothing to say, is clever enough and dishonest enough to make a specious pretense of saying something. Of the two, the latter is the more harmful—to the public by corrupting taste; to real artists by appropriating to himself the support to which they are entitled. Yet the situation is not really so depressing as it appears to be. If commercial organizations can "farm" the hinterland with enormous profit, their success indicates at least that there exists in America at present a definite need for art as well as the wealth to support artistic effort. There is no reason why this need should

not be filled by artists rather than by mere manufacturers of pictures and sculptures. It is partly, at least, a question of offering the public a chance to distinguish between the genuine and the spurious. American museums, fortunately, show an increasing willingness to include the works of serious modern artists in their loan exhibitions and their permanent collections. Occasionally, too, there are traveling exhibitions of good works. An organization has lately been formed in New York which will send for exhibition to the colleges of the country during the coming year works by modern artists—not their more ambitious efforts, but smaller things which they can afford to sell at prices not beyond the means of college students. This is a step in the right direction, and one may hope that it will be successful enough to warrant a broadening of such activities. One may note, too, with satisfaction that there has only recently been formed among sponsors of modern art in New York, an organization which purposes the gradual accumulation of modern works, foreign and American, with the ultimate object of creating a museum devoted to modern art.

It is to be hoped that this example will be followed in other cities. What is most desirable is the development, not of one or two great art centers, which will dictate to and prescribe for the smaller communities, but the growth of many centers where good art will be as easily accessible as motion pictures. It is unfortunate that the rapid centralization of wealth in this country began before culture was very widely disseminated. The draining of wealth into a few financial centers not only involves economic hardship for the smaller communities, but it impedes the development of culture. One has only to consider the many small cities of Europe, rich in the products of an age when the wealth that each community produced was

used in developing its local culture, to realize what centralization means in the way of spiritual impoverishment. I have already discussed the implications of the modern centralization of wealth and population. It is unnatural and unnecessary; but the remedy lies in the field of economics and politics rather than that of art. Its effects, however, may be somewhat mitigated. There is a magnificent opportunity for some modern Maecenas to immortalize his name by providing small communities with collections of good works of art, as the late Andrew Carnegie provided them with public libraries. Such a work, of course, if it were allowed to fall into the clutches of the commercial artists, could be a vicious influence; but if carried out intelligently, it would be of inestimable value for the development of American culture.

There are two opinions concerning the future of American art which are rather often met with among those who speculate on the subject. One is the view taken by those who hold Spengler's notion that the art of the Western world is dead, and that its place in the lives of future generations will be taken by science and mechanics. The other view—held also by many European observers who have been impressed by the vitality of American civilization—is that America is on the eve of an artistic renaissance. One might spend much time arguing the absurdity of the idea that art is dead; but it is hardly necessary, in view of the remarkable vitality displayed by the modern movement in all of its aspects—architecture, painting, sculpture, and the industrial arts—both in America and in Europe. Whether America will in the near future take the lead in this movement, is another question. With all that has been achieved here, with all the talent that unquestionably exists, with all the wealth, it has not yet done so. Whether it will do

so in future is likely, it seems to me, to depend much less upon individual artists than upon the direction in the development of the collective life. The want of a sound culture has had the unfortunate result of making a chronic adolescence the outstanding feature of our civilization; and a great art is the product of maturity, not of adolescence. This country has the wealth necessary for a great art; it has the vitality. If it attains maturity in time, there may indeed await it one of those moments of equilibrium between the forces of civilization and those of destruction—which are perpetually at war within the social organism—in which great art is born. The event cannot be foretold, although it is exhilarating to speculate upon it. What one can be sure of is that in the light of what has already been achieved under disabling handicaps, in the light of what is being done at present, we may face the future with confidence.

END

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